

A TREATISE ON
TOLERATION;
THE
IGNORANT PHILOSOPHER;
AND A
COMMENTARY
ON THE
MARQUIS OF BECARIA'S TREATISE
ON
CRIMES AND PUNISHMENTS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE LAST GENEVA EDITION OF
MR. DE VOLTAIRE,
BY THE
REV. DAVID WILLIAMS.

Arrouet de Voltaire

[2 or more vols.]

L O N D O N:

PRINTED FOR FIELDING AND WALKER, IN PATER-NOSTER-ROW.

MDCCLXXIX.

A TREATISE ON
TOLERATION

THE
IGNORANT PHILOSOPHER

COMMENTARY

MARQUIS OF DECARIA'S TREATISE



CRIMINAL ELEMENTS

BY THE
REV. DAVID WILLIAMS.

LONDON

PRINTED FOR HIGGINSON AND WARRIS, IN THE NEW-BUILDING

MILK-STREET.

A
T R E A T I S E
O N
T O L E R A T I O N;
MEMORIALS, LETTERS, &c.
RELATING TO
P E R S E C U T I O N;
AND
PARTICULARLY TO THE CASES
O F
C A L A S A N D S I R V E N.

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THE
OF
TOLEFRACTION
MEMORIALS LETTERS
RELATING TO
FERRINGTON
AND
PARTICULARS TO THE CASES

CALA
SIRVEN



DEPARTED FROM THE REIGN OF

MR. DE VOLTARE

BY THE

REV. DAVID WILLIAMS

LONDON

PRINTED FOR FIELDING AND WARRER, 10, NEW-BOSTON-ROD,
ADJACENTLY

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ERRATA.

- P. 6. l. 21. for *causes* read *that cause*.
P. 16. in the note for *Typhon* r. *Typhonius*.



TREATISE ON
TOLERATION.

CHAP. I.

A short Account of the Death of John Calas.

THE murder of Calas, committed at Toulouse by the hand of justice, on the 9th of March, 1772, is one of the most singular events which can be offered to the attention of the present age, or of posterity. We soon forget the crowds that perish in battle, not only because their lot is the inevitable consequence of war, but because those who die by the fate of arms might have slain their enemies, and have not perished without defending themselves. Where the danger and the advantage are equal, our astonishment ceases, and even our pity is weakened: but if the father of an innocent family is delivered into the hands of error, of passion, or of fanaticism; if the accused has no defence but his virtue; if his judges have nothing to apprehend from his death, but the imputation of error; if they can murder him by their sentence with impunity; then the public voice is raised; every one fears for himself; we see that

no man can hold his life in any security before a tribunal erected with a view to guard the lives of citizens ; and we all unite in demanding vengeance.

In this strange affair, religion, suicide, and parricide have been blended. The questions were, whether a father and mother had strangled their own son to obtain the favour of God ? Whether a brother had strangled his brother, or a friend his friend ; and whether the judges had the guilt of having broken on the wheel an innocent father, or of having saved a guilty mother, brother and friend ?

John Calas, at the age of sixty-eight, had been in the business of a merchant at Toulouse for forty years, and was considered by all those who had lived with him as a good father. He and his wife were protestants, and so were all his children except one, who had abjured heresy, and to whom he allowed a small annuity. He was so far removed from that absurd fanaticism which breaks all social bonds, that he approved the conversion of his son Louis Calas, and had kept in the house for thirty years a female servant who was a zealous catholic, and who had brought up all his children.

One of the sons of John Calas, called Mark-Anthony, was a man of letters. He was deemed a person of a restless, melancholy, and violent disposition. This young man, not being able to manage or to succeed in mercantile business, for which he was not qualified ; and not being admitted as advocate or council, because a certificate of his being a catholic was necessary, and what he could not obtain, resolved to put an end to his life, and communicated his design to one of his friends. He strengthened his resolution by reading every thing which had been written on suicide.

In short, having lost his money one day at play, he was determined by that circumstance to execute his design. A friend of his, as well as of the family, called Lavaisse, arrived from Bordeaux in the evening. He was a youth of the age of nineteen, remark-

remarkable for the candour and sweetness of his manners, and the son of a celebrated advocate at Toulouse. He supped, by a kind of accident, at the house of Calas. The father, the mother, Mark-Anthony the eldest, and Peter the second son, were of the company. After supper, they withdrew into a little hall, and Mark-Anthony disappeared. When the young Lavaisse had taken his leave, and Peter Calas was accompanying him down stairs, they found Mark-Anthony stripped to his shirt, and hanging at the door of the warehouse. His cloaths were folded and laid on the counter; his shirt was but a little discomposed; his hair was carefully combed, and his body had neither wounds nor bruises.*

We shall not here repeat the details of what passed on this occasion, given by the advocates; we shall not attempt to describe the grief and despair of the father and mother, whose cries were heard through the neighbourhood. Lavaisse and Peter Calas, in a state little short of distraction, ran to bring surgeons and officers of justice.

While they were acquitting themselves of this duty; while the father and mother were sobbing and shedding tears from the bitterest grief, the people of Toulouse crowded round the house. They are superstitious and passionate; each of them would regard as a monster, a brother who was not of the same religion with him. It was at Toulouse that solemn thanks were offered up to God for the death of Henry III. and that an engagement was entered into upon oath, to cut the throat of the first person who should speak of acknowledging the title of the great and good Henry IV. That city continues a yearly solemnity, in which, by a procession, and by *feux de joie*, they celebrate the day in which, two centuries ago, they massacred four thousand citizens

* After the body was carried to the town-house, it had only a scratch on the tip of the nose, and a spot on the breast, occasioned by the inadvertence of those who carried it.

for the misfortune of heresy. Six edicts of council have been issued in vain to forbid these odious festivals. The inhabitants of Toulouse continue to rejoice in them, as those of a better disposition would in the *games of Flora*.

Some fanatic among the populace exclaimed, that John Calas had hanged his own son. That exclamation being repeated, was unanimously assented to in a moment. It was added by some persons, that the deceased young man was to have made his abjuration the following day, but that his family, assisted by the young Lavaisse, had put him to death, out of hatred to the catholic religion. This was admitted beyond doubt. The whole city was persuaded, it is a principle of religion among the protestants, that a father and mother should assassinate their son, when he entertained any thoughts of being converted.

When the minds of men are once set in motion, it is not easy to stop them. It was supposed, that the protestants of Languedoc had assembled the preceding evening, that they had chosen by a plurality of voices an executioner of their sect; that the choice had fallen on young Lavaisse; that the young man, in four and twenty hours, had received the news of his election, and had travelled from Bordeaux, to aid John Calas, his wife, and his son Peter, to murder a friend, a son, and a brother.

Sieur David, sheriff of Toulouse, roused by these rumours, and wishing to have the merit of a prompt execution, instituted a process contrary to the rules and laws observed on such occasions. The family of Calas, Lavaisse, and the catholic servant, were put in irons.

A monitory letter enjoining those who knew any thing of this affair to reveal it, and which was no less iniquitous than the process, was published. They went further—Mark-Anthony Calas died a Calvinist, and if he had put an end to his own life, his body should

should have been dragged through the streets : but he was buried with the greatest pomp in the church of St. Etienne, though the curate protested against it as the greatest profanation.

There are in Languedoc four fraternities of penitents, the white, the blue, the grey and the black. These brothers wear a large cowl and a mask of cloth, with two holes to see through. They had hopes to engage Duke Fitz-James, the commandant of the province, to become one of their body, but he refused them. The order of white brothers celebrated a solemn service, at the interment of Mark-Anthony Calas, as if he had died a martyr. No festival sacred to a real martyr was ever observed with more solemnity : but the pomp of it was terrible. They placed on a magnificent scaffold a skeleton which they could cause to move, and which represented Mark-Anthony Calas holding a palm in one hand, and in the other a pen, with which he was to have signed his abjuration of heresy, but which in effect wrote the death-warrant of his unhappy father.

There was but one step further to be taken with the poor youth who had put an end to his life, and that was canonization. The people considered him as a saint ; some invoked ; some prayed at his shrine ; others requested miracles, and others related those which he had performed. A monk drew out some of his teeth, in order to be in possession of durable relicks. A devotee, who had been deaf, said he had heard the sound of the bells ; and a priest, who had received a stroke of an apoplexy, was cured on taking only an emetic. They prepared narratives of these miracles. The author of this account has an attested case of a young man who lost the use of his understanding by remaining whole nights in prayer on the tomb of this new saint, and not obtaining any of the miracles which he implored.

Some of the magistrates were of the fraternity of

white penitents. This circumstance insured the death of John Calas.

The minds of men were particularly inclined to his punishment by the approach of that singular festival, in which the inhabitants of Toulouse recognized the massacre of four thousand Huguenots; the year 1762 was their secular year. They prepared throughout the city the apparatus of this solemnity. This fired the imaginations of the people, which were already warmed. They publicly said, that the scaffold on which Calas was to be broken on the wheel, would be the greatest ornament of the festival, and that Providence had prepared this victim as a sacrifice to our holy religion. Many persons have heard and attested this kind of discourse. It seems hardly credible at this time, when philosophy has made so great a progress, and when a hundred academies are writing to meliorate our manners. Fanaticism, irritated by the success of reason, struggles under it with uncommon rage.

Thirteen judges assemble every day to try causes. There was no proof of guilt; indeed, there could be none against the family of Calas: but false religion furnished what would serve as such. Six judges insisted long and violently, that John Calas, his son Peter, and young Lavaisse, should be broken on the wheel, and that the wife of Calas should be burnt. The other seven, something more moderate, wished to have the affair examined into. This occasioned long and repeated debates. One of the judges, convinced of the innocence of the accused, and even of the impossibility of their having committed the crime, spoke warmly in their favour; he opposed the zeal of humanity to that of cruelty. He became the public advocate of the family of Calas throughout Toulouse, where the constant clamour of false religion required the blood of those unfortunate persons. Another of the judges, remarkable for his violence, was provoked by their being defended,

fended, and used more zeal and industry in inflaming the city against them. In short, this contest grew so warm, that both the judges were obliged to decline their attendance on business, and to retire into the country.

But unfortunately, the judge most favourable to Calas, had the delicacy to persist in his absence; and the other returned to give his voice against persons whom it had not been decent for him to sit in judgment upon. His voice was fatal to the pretended criminal, who was condemned by eight against five; one out of the six judges favourable at the commencement, after long persuasion, being brought over to the more severe and cruel party.

It might be expected, when parricide was the crime under consideration; or when the father of a family was to be delivered up to a horrible punishment, that the judgment against him should have been unanimous, because the proofs of so extraordinary * a crime should be evident to all the world. The least doubt in such a case should make a judge tremble, who was preparing to pronounce a sentence of death. The weakness of our reason, and insufficiency of our

* I do not recollect in history more than two examples of fathers who have been accused of assassinating their children for religion. The first is, the father of St. Barbara, whom we call St. Barbe. He had ordered two windows in the saloon of his baths. Barbe, in his absence, had a third made, that the whole might be emblematical of the Trinity. She made the sign of the cross with the tip of her finger on the marble columns, and that sign sunk deeply into them. Her father was greatly enraged, and ran after her sword in hand; but as she was hastening towards a mountain, it opened and she passed through it; her father, however, hastened round and seized her. She was stripped naked, as her father imagined, and whipped; but God saved her, by drawing over her a white cloud: at last, however, her father cut off her head. This account may be seen in a book called *Fleur des Saints*.

The second example is that of Prince Hermenegilde. He revolted against the king his father; gave him battle in the year 584, was conquered and killed by an officer. He was made a martyr, because his father was an Arian.

laws, are daily perceived. But in what instance can we point out and lament the wretched tenure of human happiness, if not where the preponderance of a single voice condemns a citizen to be broken alive on the wheel? At Athens, a sentence of death could not be pronounced, but by the judgment of a majority of fifty voices. This only proves what we have long known without effect, that the Greeks were wiser and more humane than we are.

It must appear impossible, that John Calas, a man sixty-eight years old, whose legs had long been swollen and feeble, should alone have strangled or hung up a son who was but eight and twenty, and who was a youth of uncommon strength. He must have been assisted in the execution of such a design by his wife, by his son Peter, by Lavaisse, and by the servant. They had been together the whole of the evening in which the fatal event took place. But this supposition was as absurd as the former; for how could it be supposed, that a servant who was a zealous catholic, would suffer Huguenots to assassinate a young man brought up by her, as a punishment for being attached to the religion of that very servant? How could it be supposed, that Lavaisse should come with the utmost expedition from Bordeaux to murder his friend, of whose conversion he was ignorant? Who will imagine, that a tender and affectionate mother should lay violent hands on her own son? And how, even supposing them all agreed, could they put to death by hanging, a young man, whose strength was equal to that of all of them, without long and violent struggles; without cries or groans, which would have brought the neighbourhood together, and without leaving marks of violence on the bodies or even the cloaths of the combatants?

It must have been evident, if the crime was committed, that all the persons accused were equally culpable, for it appeared they had been together the whole

whole evening. It was evident, the father alone could not have committed it; and yet the decree of the judges condemned the father alone to perish on the wheel.

The motive of this proceeding was as inconceivable as that the crime should have been committed. The judges who were resolved on the punishment of John Calas, endeavoured to persuade the others, that the feeble old man would not be able to sustain the torments inflicted on him; and that under the hands of the executioner, he would confess his crime and that of his accomplices. They were confounded when the old man dying on the wheel appealed to God as the witness of his innocence, and prayed that he would pardon his judges.

They were obliged to issue a second decree, which contradicted the first, and by which the mother, her son Peter, young Lavaisse, and the servant, were to be enlarged. But being told that the one discredited the other, that they condemned themselves, that all the accused had been together during the whole time in which the murder was supposed to have been committed, they discharged the surviving prisoners, and thereby plainly proved the innocence of the father who had been executed. To preserve some appearance of consistency, they banished Peter Calas. This seems to have been as absurd as the rest of their conduct; for Peter Calas was either guilty or innocent of the death of his brother: if he was guilty, he should have been broken on the wheel as well as his father; if he was innocent, it was wrong to banish him. But the judges, alarmed by the unjust punishment of the old man, and affected by the tender piety with which he died, imagined they might save their honour, by inducing the world to believe they shewed mercy to the son; as if this pretended mercy could appear otherwise than an act of prevarication; and they believed that the banishment of this young man, who was poor and friendless,

less, would be a matter of no consequence, and could be but a small act of injustice, in comparison of that which they had the misfortune of committing.

They began by menacing Peter Calas in his dungeon, by treating him as his father had been treated, in order to induce him to change his religion. This is what the young man has attested upon oath. His words were, "A Dominican came into my dungeon, and said I should undergo the same kind of death with my father, if I did not abjure my religion. This I attest before God. July 23, 1762."

As Peter Calas was leaving Toulouse, he met a zealous abbé, who obliged him to return into the city. He was shut up in a convent of Dominicans, and forced to go through the several ceremonies and duties enjoined by the catholic religion. This seemed to be an equivalent to the blood of the father, and religion appeared satisfied, when it thought itself amply revenged.

The daughters were taken away from the mother and placed in a convent. This unhappy woman, who had lately pressed in her arms the breathless corpse of her eldest son, while, as it were, sprinkled with the blood of her murdered husband, saw her other son banished, was deprived of her daughters, stripped of her goods, and left alone in the world, without bread, without hope, and sinking under the weight of her miseries. Some persons who had attentively examined the circumstances of this horrible affair, were so struck with their iniquity, that they advised the widow Calas to quit the place, and to demand justice at the very foot of the throne. At the time she was so reduced, as to have but few and short intervals from fainting; besides, being a native of England, and brought over to that part of France very young, the very thought of Paris alarmed her. She imagined, that the cruelty and barbarity which influenced the magistrates of Toulouse, must be more dreadful in those who governed the capital.

capital. At last, however, the duty of doing justice to the memory of her husband prevailed over her weakness. She arrived at Paris almost expiring under her wretchedness, and was astonished at the reception she had, and the tenderness with which she was countenanced and supported.

At Paris, reason prevails over fanaticism, though it be extremely powerful; in the province, fanaticism has always prevailed over reason.

Mr. de Beaumont, a celebrated advocate of the parliament of Paris, immediately undertook her cause, and stated an opinion on it, which was signed by fifteen advocates. Mr. Loiseau, a man no less eloquent than Mr. de Beaumont, wrote a memorial in favour of the family; and Mr. Mariette, advocate of the council, drew up a petition on the principles of law and justice, which struck the minds of all men with conviction.

Those generous defenders of innocence and of the laws, gave up to the widow all the profits arising from the several editions of their memorials, petitions, &c.* Paris, and even Europe, was moved with compassion, and joined this unfortunate woman in demanding justice. Judgment was given by the public in her favour long before the decree was signed by the council.

Compassion forced its way even to the minister; in spite of the continual torrent of affairs which often exclude it, and against the habit of seeing the unhappy, which has still a greater effect in hardening the heart. The daughters were restored to the mother; and they were seen, dressed in crape, and bathed in tears, to draw tears from their judges.

This family had still some enemies; for religion was involved in their case. Several persons who are

* Surreptitious editions were given in several cities, and the widow was deprived of a great part of the advantages intended for her by this generosity.

called in France Devotees,* said publicly, it was much better that an old Calvinist, admitting that he was innocent, should be broken on the wheel, than that eight counsellors of Languedoc should submit to the indignity of confessing they had been mistaken. It was the cause of the whole magistracy, which consisted of much greater numbers, and persons of greater importance, than the family of Calas, which ought to be sacrificed to the honour of magistracy. They did not consider that the honour of a judge, like that of any other man, consisted in repairing the effects of his faults. The people of France do not believe, that the pope, assisted by his cardinals, is infallible: it might be imagined, that eight judges of Toulouse could never have been thought so. All disinterested and sensible men said, that the edict at Toulouse would be reprobated throughout Europe, though particular considerations might prevent its being repealed in the council.

Such was the state of that astonishing business, when the design was conceived by several persons of understanding and impartiality, of laying before the public some reflections on toleration, indulgence, and commiseration; which the Abbé Houteville, in his imperfect and erroneous declamation on the facts above-mentioned, calls *horrible dogmas*; but which reason calls *the rights of nature*.

Either the judges of Toulouse, influenced by the fanaticism of the populace, have broken on the wheel the innocent father of a family, which is a cruelty without example; or the father and the mother have strangled their eldest son, aided in this enormous action by another of their children, and by a friend of the deceased; a supposition which is not within

* Devotee is derived from the Latin word *Devotus*. The *Devoti* of ancient Rome were those who sacrificed themselves for the safety of the republic; such as Curtius and Decius.

the bounds of possibility. In either of these cases, the abuse of religion produced a great crime. It is therefore for the interest of humanity that we should examine whether religion should be charitable or cruel?

CHAP. II.

Consequences of the Punishment of John Calas.

IF the white penitents were the authors of the punishment of an innocent man; of the total ruin and dispersion of a family; of fixing on them an opprobrium which should be annexed to injustice only, but which is ever the consequence of punishment; if those white penitents assisted in celebrating as a saint, a youth whose body they should have dragged through the streets, and this in order to have the virtuous father of a family broken alive on the wheel; these circumstances of guilt should doubtless render them truly penitent for the remainder of their lives. They, as well as their judges who condemned this unfortunate man, should weep for their crimes; but not arrayed in long and white habits, and covered with masques to disguise them.

We respect the sacred fraternities; they are the means of edification: but however great the advantages which may accrue to the state from them; can they be supposed to balance the dreadful evils which they have occasioned? They seem to have been instituted by the kind of zeal which animates the catholics of Languedoc against those whom they call Huguenots. It might be imagined, they had made a vow to hate their fellow-creatures; and indeed we seem in general to have just so much religion as may induce us to hate and persecute, but not enough to love and serve

serve one another. What would be the consequence, if these fraternities were governed by such enthusiasts as those who formerly animated congregations of mechanics and of *gentlemen*; among whom the habit of having visions was reduced into an art or a system; as we are told by one of our most eloquent and learned magistrates? What would be the consequence, if these holy brothers had those dark rooms called the *chambers of meditation*, where devils were painted armed with horns and talons; where the gulphs of the damned were exhibited; crosses and poignards, with the name of Jesus at the bottom of the picture? What a spectacle to be contemplated by the eyes of men who are already infatuated, and whose imaginations are highly inflamed, while they are implicitly devoted to the will of their superiors!

The time has been, as we know too well, when these fraternities were dangerous. The Frerots and the Flagellants have raised great commotions. The *league* commenced with such associations. Why should men thus distinguish themselves from their fellow-citizens? It is an insult to the rest of the nation. Would it be desirable that all Christians should enter into these fraternities? Europe would afford a droll spectacle; the people dressed in capuchins, covered with masques, with two little holes to see through! Can it be seriously imagined, that God prefers such an accoutrement to a coat? Besides, this habit is the uniform of disputants, which warns their adversaries to betake themselves to their arms; it excites a kind of civil war in the minds of the people; and it would lead to the most fatal effects, if the king and his ministers were not as prudent as fanatics are violent and foolish.

We know full well the consequences which have taken place since Christians have disputed on dogmas. Human blood has been flowing either on scaffolds or in battles, without much interruption, in fourteen hundred years. If we confine ourselves to

the wars and horrors which the disputes on the reformation have occasioned; if we view the evils they have given rise to in France; perhaps a reduced and faithful picture of such calamities will open the eyes of persons who are but ill-informed, and may affect the minds of those who are well-disposed.

CHAP. III.

An Idea of the Reformation in the sixteenth Century.

WHEN the minds of men began to be enlightened by the revival of letters, complaints of abuses became general, and the whole world confessed those complaints were just.

Pope Alexander VI. had publicly purchased the tiara, and his five illegitimate children partook of its advantages. His son, the Cardinal Duke de Borgia, in concert with himself, put to death Vitelli, Urbino, Gravina, Oliveretto, and a hundred other lords, in order to seize their domains. Julius II. actuated by the same spirit, excommunicated Louis XII. and gave his kingdom to the first man who would take possession of it, while his holiness himself put on his helmet and his cuirass, and spread devastation and bloodshed through a great part of Italy. Leo X. to defray the expences of his pleasures, trafficked in indulgencies, as men do in any articles of merchandize, in a public market. Those who opposed such oppressions could not be blamed in a moral view; we may examine whether they could justly in a political?

They said, that Jesus Christ, having never exacted first fruits, sold dispensations for this world, or indulgencies for the other, there could be no obligation on the several kingdoms of Europe to pay the price

price of such things to a foreign prince. Supposing the first fruits, processses in the court of Rome, and the dispensations which are purchased, cost France but five hundred thousand francs a year, we must have paid, since the reign of Francis the First, in two hundred and fifty years, a hundred and twenty millions, and allowing for the difference in the value of silver, that sum would amount to two hundred and fifty millions of our money. We cannot therefore admit, without some kind of blasphemy, that those who are called heretics, in proposing the abolition of those singular imposts, at the account of which posterity will be astonished, were likely to do any great injury to the kingdom; they were rather good calculators than bad subjects. It may be added, that they were the only people who understood the Greek language, or were acquainted with antiquity. And it must be confessed, notwithstanding their errors, we owe to them that the human mind was developed, after having been a great while buried in the grossest barbarism.

But as they denied the existence of purgatory, of which no man should entertain a doubt, and which brought a revenue to the monks; as they neglected the relicks, which they ought to have revered; as they even attacked dogmas* of great sacredness; they

* They revived the opinion of Berenger on the Eucharist. They denied that one body could be at one time in a hundred thousand different places; and that attributes could subsist without a subject. They believed it was impossible that substances which proved to be bread and wine to the eyes, to the taste, to the stomach, should be annihilated at the same time they actually existed; and they maintained all the errors which had been formerly condemned in Berenger. They disputed several things in the first fathers of the church, and particularly in St. Justin, who says in his dialogue against Typhon, "The use of fine flour in sacrifices, was typical of the Eucharist, which Jesus Christ has ordained us to offer up in commemoration of his passion."

Καί ἡ τῆς σεμιδαλεως, &c.

Τύπος ἦν τῆς ἁρτης τῆς εὐχαριστίας, &c.

They

they were not answered at first but by being burnt. The king who protected and assisted them in Germany, marched in Paris at the head of a procession which led several unfortunate victims to execution. The manner of tormenting them was the following. They suspended them to one end of a beam which had a weight at the other; a great fire was made under them, into which they were plunged for a little while and lifted up again. They were made to feel the pains of death by degrees, until at last they expired by the most tedious and most dreadful miseries which cruelty could have invented.

A little before the death of Francis I. some members of the parliament of Provence, irritated by ecclesiastics against the inhabitants of Merindol and of Cabriere, applied to the king for troops, to assist at the execution of nineteen persons who had been condemned by them; they caused six thousand to be murdered, without respect to sex or age; and they reduced thirty towns to ashes. It was a misfortune for those people, who had been hitherto unknown, to have been born in the district of Vaudois. This was their whole crime. They had been three hundred years the industrious inhabitants of deserts and mountains, which they had improved and rendered fertile by the most extraordinary industry. The innocent and pastoral life led by them, revived the

They also repeated what had been said in the first centuries against the adoration of relicks; they cited those words of Vigilantius; "Is it necessary that you should respect, nay adore, the vilest dust? Do the souls of the martyrs continue to love their ashes? Idolatrous customs are introduced into the church; we light candles in the middle of the day; we may during our whole lives pray for each other: but after death, of what use can our prayers be?"

But they did not say how St. Jerom answered those questions of Vigilantius. In short, they would have referred every thing to the apostolic times; and would not allow, that the church being secured and fortified, had heightened the severity of its discipline; they condemned riches, which however were necessary to support the majesty of divine worship.

ideas which have been given of the first ages of the world. They had no knowledge of the neighbouring towns, but what arose from their carrying into them the fruits and productions of their lands. They were ignorant of law-suits and of wars. They did not even defend themselves. They were put to death in the same manner with those timid and unsuspicious animals which are deluded into situations for that purpose.*

After the death of Francis I. who is known more for his gallantries and his misfortunes than his cruelties; the punishment of a thousand hereticks; of Dubourg, a counsellor of parliament, and the massacre of Vassy, forced those who were persecuted to take arms; their sect seemed to be multiplied by the flames of faggots and the sword of the executioner. Rage took place of patience; they imitated the cru-

* The very respectable president De Thou, describes this innocent and unfortunate people in the same manner. *Homines esse qui trecentis circiter abhinc annis asperum & incultum solum vestigale a dominis acceperint, quod improbo labore & assiduo cultu frugum ferax & aptum pecori reddiderint; patientissimos eos laboris & inediae, a litibus abhorrentes, erga egenos munificos, tributa principi & sua jura dominis sedulo & summa fide pendere; Dei cultum assiduis precibus, & morus innocentiam præ se ferre, ceterum raro divorum templa adire, nisi si quando ad vicina suis finibus oppida mercandi aut negotiorum causa divertant; quo si quandoque pedem inserant, non Dei divorumque statutis advolvi, nec cerebri eis aut donaria ulla ponere; non sacerdotes ab eis rogari ut pro se, aut pro quinquorum manibus rem divinam faciant, non cruce frontem insigniri uti aliorum moris est: cum caelum oculis Dei opem implorare; non religionis ergo peregrè proficisci, non per vias antè crucium simulacra caput aperire; sacra alio ritu, & populari lingua celebrare; non denique pontifici aut episcopis honorem deferre, sed quosdam è suis numero delectos pro antistitibus & doctoribus habere. Hæc uti ad Franciscum relata VI. Eidsfel anni, &c. Madame De Cental, to whom a part of the ravaged territories belonged, where nothing was seen but the dead bodies of its former inhabitants, petitioned for justice to Henry II. who referred her to the parliament of Paris. The advocate-general of Provence, called Guerin, the principal author of this massacre, was condemned to lose his head. De Thou says, that he bore the punishment of the guilty, *quod aulicorum favore destitueretur*, because he had no friends at court.*

elties of their enemies; nine civil wars filled France with carnage; a peace more fatal even than war produced the massacre of St. Bartholomew; of which there had not been an example in all the annals of human crimes.

The league assassinated Henry III. and Henry IV. by the hands of a Dominican, and a monster who had been a Barnardine. There are persons who pretend that humanity, indulgence, and liberty of conscience, are horrible things: but have they in truth produced calamities comparable to those we have mentioned?

C H A P. IV.

Whether Toleration be dangerous? And in what Nations it is allowed?

SOME persons have said, that if we shew a benevolent indulgence towards any erroneous brethren who pray to God in bad French, it would be putting arms into their hands; we should again see the battles of Jarnac, of Moncontour, of Coutras, of Dreux, of St. Denys, &c. I am ignorant of the events which may arise, because I am not a prophet. But it seems to me, that it is not reasoning well, to say, "The people have revolted when I have done them injuries, therefore they will revolt if I should do them good."

I will venture to invite those who are at the head of government, and those who are designed for places of importance, to consider carefully, whether they have reason to apprehend that mildness will have the same effect as cruelty, in exciting sedition or rebellion? Whether events which have taken place in certain circumstances are likely to take place in those

which are different? And whether times, opinions, and manners are always the same?

It is very true, that the Huguenots have been frantic with fanaticism, and dipped their hands in blood, as we have done. But is the present generation as barbarous as its ancestors? Time, reason, which has been lately so much improved, good books, and social manners, have softened the spirits of those who influence and govern this people. Do we not see, that the face of Europe has been almost wholly changed in the last fifty years?

Government is sufficiently fortified on all hands; while the manners of men are considerably meliorated. The general police, aided by numerous armies always in readiness for duty, secure us from the very apprehensions of the return of that confusion and anarchy, when the peasants of the different religions were hastily got together between their seed-time and harvest, and made to engage each other.

Other times, other cares. It would be absurd at this time to decimate the Sorbonne, because it petitioned formerly that the *maid of Orleans* should be burnt; because it pronounced Henry III. had forfeited his right to the throne, and even excommunicated him; and proscribed Henry IV. We should not think it necessary to guard against other bodies of men who have committed the same absurd crimes in times of public frenzy. This would not only be unjust; but it would be as foolish as to oblige all the present inhabitants of Marseilles to undergo a course of physic, because the plague raged in that city in the year 1720.

Should we think it a duty to sack the city of Rome, after the example of Charles V. because in the year 1585, Sixtus V. granted a general indulgence for nine years to all the French who would take up arms against their sovereign? And will it not be sufficient, to prevent Rome from running into such excesses in future.

The

The fury inspired by a dogmatic spirit, and an abuse of the Christian religion, has shed as much blood, and produced as many disasters in Germany, in England, and in Holland, as in France. At present, however, religious differences occasion no disturbances in those states. A Jew, a Greek, a Roman Catholic, a Lutheran, a Calvinist, an Anabaptist, a Socinian, a Moravian, &c. live as brethren under those governments, and contribute equally to the general good of society.

They are no longer apprehensive in Holland, that the zeal of a Gomar,* on the subject of predestination, should endanger the head of a grand pensionary. They are not apprehensive in London, that the disputes of the presbyterians and episcopalians, on the subjects of liturgies and surplices, should bring a king of England to the scaffold.† Ireland, grown populous and rich; its catholic inhabitants will hardly employ themselves for two months in sa-

* Francis Gomar was a protestant divine. He maintained, against Arminius, that God had from eternity destined the greater part of mankind to be eternally punished. This infernal opinion was supported by a disposition allied to it, that which leads to persecution. The grand pensionary Barneveldt, who was an Arminian, lost his head at the age of seventy-two, on the 13th of May, 1619, *for having grieved the church of God.*

† A declaimer, in an apology for the revocation of the edict of Nantes, speaking of England, says, "It might be expected that a false religion should produce such fruits. If there be an atrocious act to be committed, these islanders are ready for it. They are the contempt of mankind." It must be confessed, that the author has not chosen his time judiciously to hold up the English as objects of contempt. It is not, in my opinion, when a nation is signalizing its bravery and generosity, and is victorious in all the quarters of the world, that it may be said to be contemptible in the estimation of mankind. This singular passage is to be found in a chapter on intolerance. This abominable book, such as might be expected only from the madman of Verberie, cannot be the work of a man in orders; for what pastor would write in this manner? His fury is so extravagant, as to justify the massacre of St. Bartholomew. It was believed, this book, filled with horrible paradoxes, would be in the hands of all the world; but it is hardly known.

crificing to God their protestant fellow-subjects; burying them alive; hanging up mothers, and suspending their daughters to their necks, in order to contemplate them dying together; ripping up women with child; taking out infants half-formed, and giving them to pigs and dogs to be eaten; putting poignards into the hands of their prisoners, and forcibly conducting them to the bosoms of their wives, of their daughters, of their fathers, and of their mothers; imagining that by those means they were rendered parricides, and that at the same time they were exterminated, their damnation was insured. This account is given by Rapin Thoiras, who was an officer on duty in Ireland soon after these horrible transactions. All the annals and histories of England confirm the truth of this representation; which it is to be hoped will ever remain without its parallel. Philosophy, the sister of religion, has disarmed those hands which superstition had so long held in blood; and the human mind, recovering from its intoxication, is astonished at the excesses into which fanaticism had carried it.

We have even in France, an opulent province where Lutheranism has a greater number of adherents than the religion of Rome. The university of Alsace is in the hands of Lutherans; they partake in the honours and burthens of public offices; not a single religious contest has disturbed the repose of the province, since it has been annexed to our government. And why? Because no man has been persecuted. If you attempt not to restrain and injure the minds of men, they will be well affected towards you.

I do not say, that all those who are not of the religion of a prince, should partake of public honours and places, equally with those who are. In England, Roman catholics, who are considered as in the interest of the *Pretender*, cannot obtain public employ-

ployments, and are doubly taxed; in other respects, they enjoy all the rights of good subjects.

It is supposed, that some French bishops are of opinion, it is not for their honour or their interest, to have any Calvinists within their jurisdictions, and that this is the greatest obstacle to the prevalence of a spirit of toleration. But I cannot think so. The bishops of France are men of rank, who think and act with a dignity becoming their noble birth; they are candid and generous: it is but justice to say so of them. They must think, that those who are forced out of their dioceses, are not likely to be converted in distant countries: but that being brought back to their pastors, they might be informed by their instructions, and affected by their examples; no dishonour would arise from having converted them; and the temporal interests of the church would not suffer; for the domains of the prelates would be enriched in proportion to the numbers which occupied them.

A bishop of Varmie, in Poland, had an anabaptist for his farmer, and a Socinian for his steward. It was proposed, that he should discharge and persecute the one, because he did not believe the doctrine of consubstantiality; and the other, because he had a son at the age of fifteen who had not been baptized. He answered, they would be eternally damned in the other world; but in this they were very necessary to him.

Let us go out of our little sphere, and consider the state of things in other parts of our globe. The Grand-Seignior governs in peace twenty provinces of different religions. Two hundred thousand Greeks live in security at Constantinople. The muphti names and presents the Greek patriarch to the emperor. A Latin patriarch is also suffered. The sultan appoints Latin bishops for some of the Grecian * isles; and uses the following formulary,

C 4

" I com-

* See Ricaut.

“ I command him to go and reside as bishop at the
 “ isle of Chio, according to the ancient custom, and
 “ to the vain ceremonies of the inhabitants.” That
 empire is filled with Jacobites,* Nestorians, Mono-
 thelites, Copti, Christians of the sect of St. John,
 Jews, Guebres, and Banians. The Turkish annals
 do not record any revolt occasioned by either of these
 religions.

Go into India, into Persia, into Tartary, you
 will there see the same toleration, and the same tran-
 quility. Peter the Great countenanced all kinds of
 religious worship in his vast empire. Commerce
 and agriculture gained by such prudence; and the
 state never suffered by it.

The government of China, in four thousand years,
 hath adopted only the worship of the Noachides,
 which is the simple adoration of one God. At the
 same time, it tolerates the superstitions of Fo, and
 a multitude of Bonzes, who would be dangerous, if
 the wisdom of the public tribunals did not keep them
 in order.

It is true, that the great emperor Yontchin, the
 wisest and most magnanimous prince which China has
 ever had, drove the Jesuits out of the empire. This
 was not owing to his own intolerance; but to that
 of the Jesuits. They relate, in their own letters,
 the words of this good prince: “ I know that your
 “ religion is intolerant. I know what you have
 “ done at the Manillas and Japan. You deceived
 “ my father; but you are not to hope to deceive
 “ me in the same manner.” On reading the whole
 of the discourse which he condescended to hold with
 them, he appears to be the wisest and most humane
 of men. Would it have been prudent in him, to
 suffer those persons to remain in his dominions, who,
 under pretence of being natural philosophers, and
 by shewing at court their thermometers and eolipiles,
 had seduced into a revolt a prince of the blood? And
 what

* A religious sect.

what would this emperor have said, if he had read our histories, and had been informed of the cruelties of the league, and the contrivance of the gunpowder-plot?

It was sufficient for him to be told of the indecent quarrels of the Jesuits, the Dominicans, the Capuchins, and the secular priests, sent from the utmost extremity of the world into his dominions. They came to preach the truth; and they anathematized each other. The Emperor therefore sent back those turbulent strangers:—but with goodness! What care was taken to provide properly for their voyage; and to prevent insults on their journey to a port! Even their banishment was an example of toleration and humanity.

The Japanese* were the most candid and tolerating people upon earth. There were twelve different but peaceable religions established in their empire. The Jesuits came and formed a thirteenth. But very soon, aiming to interrupt and exterminate other religions;—we know what followed; a civil war, as dreadful as that occasioned in France by the league, desolated the country. The Christian religion was drowned, as it were, in torrents of blood; the Japanese excluded strangers from their empire; and they regard us in the same manner, which the English did those wolves, of which they cleared their island. The minister Colbert, who knew that our commerce with the Japanese was for our advantage and not theirs, tried every art to renew it, but he found them inflexible.

Thus the state of things in the whole of our great continent proves clearly, that it is not necessary to profess, or to act on the principles of toleration.

Let us turn to the other hemisphere. In Carolina, the constitution of whose government was given by the great Locke, it is sufficient to form a church

* See Kempfer; as well as all accounts of Japan.

to be protected by law, that seven fathers of families should assemble for public worship. This liberty has never occasioned any disorder. God knows, that this example is not given with the most distant hope, that France may be induced to imitate it ! It is meant only to shew, that the utmost latitude which can be given on the principles of toleration, have not been attended with the slightest inconvenience. But that which may be very useful and very good in a rising colony, may not be practicable in an ancient kingdom.

What shall we say of those Christians of *primitive* appearance ; who, in derision, have been called Quakers ; and who, while their little customs have been ridiculous, have given an example of virtue, and preached peace without effect to the rest of mankind ? There are about an hundred thousand of them in Pensylvania ; and discord and controversy are unknown in that happy country. The very name of Philadelphia, given to their capital, and which is a kind of memento that all men are brethren, is an exemplary circumstance, and a severe reproach to those nations who are yet unacquainted with the effects of toleration.

In short, candour and toleration have never excited civil commotions ; while intolerance has covered the earth with carnage. It is not difficult to judge of the different claims of these rivals ; those of the mother who would consent to have her child murdered rather than relinquish her claim ; and those of one who would give him up, provided he is suffered to live.

I speak here only of the interest of nations ; and respecting, as is my duty, the principles of theology, I have no object in this article, but the physical and moral good of society. I would wish every attentive reader to consider the truths I have advanced ; to correct any misapprehensions on them, and to enlarge their evidence and effect. Those readers who com-

communicate their thoughts to each other, may always improve on an author.*

CHAP. V.

In what Cases Toleration might be allowed.

I May venture to imagine, that an enlightened and magnanimous minister; a wise and humane minister; a prince who understands that his interest consists in the number, and his glory in the happiness of his subjects; may deign to cast an eye on this irregular and defective work. He will supply what is wanting from his own knowledge; and will say to himself, "What can I risque in having my lands
" cultivated and beautified by a greater number of
" laborious hands; in having tributes augmented,
" and the state more flourishing?"

* Mr. De la Bourdonnaie, intendant of Rouen, says, that the manufacture of hats is given up at Caudebec and at Neufchatel, since the Protestants have been forced to fly for refuge into other countries. Mr. Foucaut, intendant of Caen, says, that trade in general is reduced to one half of what it has been. Mr. De Maupeou, intendant of Poitiers, says, that the manufacture of druggs is no more. Mr. De Bezons, intendant of Bordeaux, complains that there is no trade at Clerac or at Nerac. Mr. De Mironenil, intendant of Tourain, says, that the commerce of Tours is less than it has been by ten millions (of livres probably) in a year. And all these things are the effects of persecution. See the memorials delivered in by the intendants in 1698. Above all, we should regard the number of land and sea officers, sailors, &c. which were forced into foreign services, and fought often with fatal success against France; and we may judge, whether intolerance has not done an injury to the state.

I have not the presumption to point out views for ministers whose genius and sentiments are well known, and whose hearts are noble as their birth; they will immediately see, that the re-establishment of the marine requires some indulgence towards the inhabitants of our coasts.

Ger-

Germany would have been a desert covered with the bones of Catholics, Evangelists, the Reformed, Anabaptists, who were destroying each other, if the peace of Westphalia had not stipulated liberty of conscience.

We have Jews at Bordeaux, at Mentz, in Alsace; we have Lutherans, Molinists and Jansenists. And are not Calvinists to be tolerated and kept in order, on nearly the same conditions which are granted the Catholics in London? The greater the number of sects, the less dangerous must each of them be; they are weakened by being multiplied; and all may be properly regulated, by just laws, which prohibit tumultuous assemblies, prevent injuries and seditions, and which are executed with a steady and uniform vigor.

We know, that many heads of families, who have made fortunes abroad, are disposed to return. They require only the protection which they are entitled to by the laws of nature; that the validity of their marriages, and the legitimacy of their children, should be acknowledged; that they should be intitled to their inheritances, and that their persons should be free: they do not stipulate for public temples, or for admission into offices and dignities: the Catholics have no such privileges in England, and hardly in any other country. The question is not, Whether we are to grant immense privileges, or to deliver up places of strength and security to a faction? But, whether we should not suffer a peaceable people to live? Whether we should not soften edicts, which may formerly have been necessary, but which are not so at this time? We do not dictate to a minister what he ought to do; we are soliciting in behalf of the unfortunate.

In how many ways may these people be rendered useful, and prevented from ever becoming dangerous! The prudence of a minister, aided by a council, and supported by the power of government, may easily

easily divide means as effectual for that purpose, as those which have been happily used in other nations.

There are *fanatics* still remaining among the populace of the Calvinistic denomination: but there are greater numbers among our Convulsionists. The foolish rabble of St. Medard are not considered as of the least importance in the nation. The Calvinist prophets are no more. The certain method of diminishing the number of maniacs, if there be any, is to leave the disorder of their minds to the operations of reason, which slowly but infallibly removes it.

Reason is ever mild and humane; it inspires a disposition to indulgence, it prevents discord, lays the sure foundation of virtue, and secures obedience to the laws, by rendering it amiable, more effectually than force can do. Besides, the effect of that ridicule which is now thrown by men of sense on religious enthusiasm, is to be taken into the account. That ridicule forms a very powerful barrier against the extravagances of all sectaries. Past times are as if they never had been. We should always start from the ground we are upon; or from the point, to which nations may be said to be arrived.

There have been times in which it was thought necessary to issue edicts against those who taught any doctrine contrary to the categories of Aristotle, to the prevailing horror of a vacuum, to the definition of quiddities, or the universal idea of a particular part of a thing.

We have in Europe above an hundred volumes of jurisprudence on sorcery, and on the manner of distinguishing real from false forcerers. The excommunication of grasshoppers, and of insects hurtful to harvests, has been much in use, and the form of it remains in some rituals. These usages are passed. Aristotle, the forcerers, and the grasshoppers are suffered to remain in peace. Instances of these solemn

lemn follies, formerly so important, are without number. They have succeeded each other from time to time; but when their effects were known, and men were tired of them, they disappeared. If a man at this time took it into his head to be a Carpocratian, an Eutichean, a Monotholite, a Monophosite, a Nestorian, a Manichean, &c. what would be the consequence? He would be laughed at in the same manner as one who should add a ruff or a doublet to the simple habit of the ancients.

The nation was just opening its eyes, when the Jesuits, De Tellier and Doucin, drew up the bull *Unigenitus*, and sent it to Rome. They fancied themselves in those times of ignorance, when the people adopted without examination, the most absurd assertions. They had the audacity to proscribe that proposition, which is a truth without an exception to it in any case, or at any time—"The fear of an unjust excommunication should not prevent a man from doing his duty." This was to proscribe reason, the liberties of the Gallic church, and the foundation of morality. It was like saying to men, God commands you never to do your duty, when you fear injustice. Common-sense has never been insulted with more effrontery: but the Romish counsellors do not scruple such offences. The court of Rome was told, that such a bull was necessary, and that the nation desired it; it was signed, sealed, and sent, without knowing or adverting to the consequences; for, most assuredly, if these had been foreseen, the severity of the bull had been mitigated. The contests and troubles occasioned by it were very great, and the king put an end to them by his prudence and goodness.

The case is the same with the greater number of those points which divide us and the Protestants. There are some which cannot be of the least consequence; others may appear more weighty and grave: but the fury of disputation concerning them is so abated,

abated, that the Protestants never preach on controverted subjects in any of their churches.

It is this period of disgust, of satiety, or rather of reason, which we may fix upon as an epoch; or consider as a pledge of the public tranquillity. The spirit of controversy is an epidemic disorder, the rage of which is almost spent; and those who have been affected with it, have only to observe a regular and proper regimen. In short, it is the interest of the state, that the exiled son should peaceably and modestly return to the house of his father.—Humanity enjoins it; reason advises it; and policy cannot be alarmed at it.

CHAP. VI.

Whether Intolerance be a Principle of Nature, or a Law of Humanity?

THE rights of nature are those which nature points out to all men. You have supported and brought up your child. He owes you respect as his father, and gratitude as his benefactor. You have a right to those productions of the earth which your hands have cultivated. You have made, and you have received a promise; that promise ought to be kept.

The rights of humanity must be grounded in every case, on those of nature; the universal principle of which is, "Do not that to another, which thou wouldst not have done unto thee." Allowing this principle, it is not easy how one man can say to another, "Believe as I believe; believe what thou canst not believe, or thou wilt be damned." This is said in Portugal, in Spain, in Goa. In other countries men have the moderation to say only,
"Be-

“ Believe, or I shall hate thee. Believe, or I will
 “ do thee all the injury in my power. Monster!
 “ thou art not of the same religion with me; thou
 “ hast no religion; and thou shalt be made an ob-
 “ ject of horror to thy neighbours, to the city, or
 “ to the province of which thou art an inhabitant.”

If it were an obligation of humanity to think and act in this manner, it would be the duty of the Japanese to hate the inhabitants of China; who should execrate those of Siam; who should persecute the Gangarides;* who should wage war on those of Indostan: a Mogul would tear out the heart of the first Malabar which he met; a Malabar would cut the throat of a Persian; a Persian would murder a Turk: and all would fall on Christians; who have long been biting and devouring one another.

The principle or the right of intolerance is therefore absurd and barbarous. It is the right of tigers; nay it is more horrible: for tigers murder to eat; we are exterminated merely for paragraphs.

CHAP. VII.

Whether the Greeks knew any Thing of Intolerance.

ALL those people of whom history has given us any knowledge, have regarded their different religions as bands which have kept them together; and as forming a general association of mankind. There was a kind of right of hospitality among the gods, similar to that which prevailed among men. When a stranger arrived in any city, the first thing he did was to adore the gods of the place. Even the gods

* Voltaire probably means those people who inhabit the eastern shores of the Ganges.

of enemies were venerated. The Trojans addressed their prayers to the gods who fought on the side of the Greeks.

Alexander went into the deserts of Lybia to consult the god Ammon ; to whom the Greeks gave the name of Zeus, and the Romans of Jupiter ; though each nation had a Jupiter and a Zeus of its own. When the ancients besieged a city, they sacrificed and prayed to the gods of that city, to render them favourable to their designs. Thus, even in the dissensions of war, religion had a tendency to unite them ; and, if it commanded inhuman and horrible actions, it sometimes softened the rage and fury of men.

I may be mistaken ; but it appears to me, that not one of all the civilized nations of antiquity, restrained the natural liberty of thinking. All had a religion. But it seems to me, they conducted themselves towards men, as they did towards the gods. They all acknowledged a supreme being ; but they associated to him a prodigious number of inferior divinities. They had one general faith ; but they permitted any number of particular systems.

The Greeks, for example, although they were extremely religious, suffered the Epicureans to deny a providence, and the existence of the soul. I do not speak of other sects, who all militated against those clear and accurate ideas which men should have of the Deity ; and they were all tolerated.

Socrates, who approached the nearest of all their philosophers to the knowledge of God ; is said to have suffered for it, and to have died a martyr to the Deity. He is the only man whom the Greeks are said to have put to death for his opinions. If these were the cause of his condemnation, his fate cannot be brought to justify intolerance ; since the only man whom the Greeks punished on that principle, was one who adored the Deity ; and they tolerated and honoured those who propagated the most un-
D worthy

worthy notions of him. I would not advise the enemies of toleration, to avail themselves of an example furnished by the odious judges of Socrates.

It is evident, that Socrates was the victim of a furious party, violently enraged against him. The sophists, orators and poets who taught in schools; and even the preceptors who had the care of young men of distinction, were all his enemies. He says himself, in a discourse attributed to him by Plato, that he went from house to house, to convince the people that those preceptors were ignorant. Such conduct does not seem worthy of a person whom an oracle pronounced to be the wisest of men. A priest and one of the council of five hundred, were instigated to appear against him. They preferred a vague accusation of him, which, I confess, I do not comprehend. His apologist says, in general, that he was charged with inspiring youth with principles unfavourable to the established religion and government. This is the method of calumniators. But facts should be averred before a tribunal; accusations should be stated under distinct heads, and the circumstances affecting them should be pointed out. This is not the case in the process against Socrates, as it has been brought down to us. We only know, that at the commencement of his prosecution, he had two hundred and twenty voices in his favour. The tribunal of five hundred had therefore two hundred and twenty philosophers; that is a considerable number; I doubt we should have a difficulty in finding so many, on such an occasion, in any other country. However, the majority were for his condemnation, and he died by poison. But we are to recollect, that the Athenians soon recovered themselves, and held the accusers and judges of Socrates in the utmost horror; that Melitus, the principal instrument in his condemnation, suffered death for his conduct; that the others were banished; and that a temple was erected to the memory of Socrates. Philosophy was
never

so well indemnified, or so much honoured. The fate of Socrates is, in fact, the most dreadful argument which can be alledged against intolerance. The Athenians had an altar dedicated to deities who were strangers, and to deities who were to them unknown. Can there be a better argument, not only in favour of their indulgence, in regard to the prejudices of all nations, but likewise of respect for their methods of worship?

A worthy man, who is not an enemy of reason, of literature, of probity, or of his country—apologising lately for the affair of St. Bartholomew, mentioned the war in Phocis, called the *sacred war*, as if it had been entered upon, on account of public worship, of doctrines, or of theological arguments. The right to a territory was in dispute; which is the subject of all wars. Sheaves of corn are not symbols of faith; and no city of Greece ever fought for opinions. Besides, what would this mild and modest man infer, if we were to admit the example he produces? Would he have us enter on a *sacred war*?

CHAP. VIII.

Whether the Romans tolerated Religious Opinions?

FROM the time of Romulus to that in which the Christians disputed with the priests of the empire, we read not of one man who was persecuted for opinions among the Romans. Cicero doubted of every thing. Lucretius denied every thing. And they were not even reproached. The licence allowed was so great, that Pliny, the naturalist, begins his book by denying the existence of a god; and by saying, if there be one, it must be the sun. Cicero,

speaking of hell, says, *Non est anus tam excors quæ credat*—You will not find an old woman weak enough to believe it. Juvenal says, *Nec pueri credunt*—Children do not believe it. This maxim was recited in the public theatre at Rome, *Post mortem nihil est, ipsaque mors nihil*—There is nothing to be expected after death; death itself is nothing. We may abhor those maxims; we should rather pardon and excuse them in a people who had not been enlightened by the Gospel. They are false; they are impious: but we are to conclude, that the Romans were extremely indulgent, since we do not find they excited the least murmur.

The general principle of the senate and people of Rome was, *deorum offensa Diis curæ*; “The gods will take cognizance of offences committed against themselves.” That superior people thought of nothing but conquering, governing, and civilizing the world. They have been our legislators, as well as our conquerors; and Cæsar, who gave us fetters, laws, and games, never wished that we should quit our druids for him, though he was one of the pontiffs of a people who ruled the world. The Romans did not worship according to the rites of all religions; they did not give them the public sanction: but they permitted them. They had no material object of worship in the reign of Numa; no images; no statues. They very soon adopted the *Dii majorum gentium*, gods with which the Greeks had made them acquainted. The law of the twelve tables, *Deos peregrinos ne colunto*, meant, that the ceremonies and festivals supported by the state, should be confined to those gods which were approved of by the senate. Isis had a temple at Rome, until the priests, bribed by Mundus, suffered him to personate the god Anubis, and to lie with Paulina in the temple: Tiberius then ordered it to be demolished. It is true, that Josephus is the only one who relates this fact: he did not live at the
time

time in which it must have taken place; he was credulous, and apt to exaggerate. It is not very probable, that, in a period so enlightened as the reign of Tiberius, a woman of the first condition should have been so weak as to believe, she was to enjoy the favours of the god Anubis.

But whether this anecdote be true or false, it is certain, that the Egyptian superstition had a temple at Rome, by the connivance or consent of the state. The Jews carried on commerce there in the time of the Punic war, and had synagogues in the reign of Augustus. This indulgence has been continued to them with little interruption; and they have been tolerated even in modern Rome. Can there be a stronger proof, that toleration was regarded by the Romans as an important and sacred part of the law of nations?

It is said, that when the Christians appeared, they were persecuted by those Romans, who had never persecuted other sects. It has appeared to me unquestionable, that the allegation is false. This may be proved by the authority of St. Paul. We learn in the Acts of the Apostles,* that St. Paul was accused, by the Jews, of having attempted to invalidate the Mosaic law by the religion of Jesus Christ. St. James proposed, that St. Paul should have his head shaved, and should go to the temple, accompanied by four Jews, to be purified, "in order to convince the world, that what has been said of you is false, and that you continue to observe the law of Moses."

The Christian apostle proposed to employ himself accordingly for seven days in going through the ceremonies of the Jewish law: but the time was not elapsed, when the Jews of Asia discovered him; and in conjunction not only with other Jews, but even with some Gentiles, excited a clamour of profanation

* Chap. xxi. and xxii.

against him. He was taken up, and carried first before Felix the governor, and afterwards to the tribunal of Festus. The Jews, in crowds, required he should be put to death. Festus replied,* “It was not
 “ the custom of the Romans to condemn a man, un-
 “ til the accused had been confronted with the accu-
 “ sers, and until he had the liberty of defending him-
 “ self.”

These words of the Roman magistrate are the more remarkable, as the only sentiment he seems to have entertained of Paul is contempt; deceived by the false informations of reason, he took him for a fool. He told him,† *Multæ te litteræ ad insaniam convertant*—“much learning hath made thee mad.” Festus, therefore, was influenced only by the equity of the Roman law, when he afforded his protection to a person whom he did not know and could not esteem.

Here we have the testimony of the Holy Spirit, in favour of our opinion, that the Romans were strangers to persecution and administered justice. It was not the Romans, but the Jews, who raised a tumult against Paul. St. James, the brother of Jesus, was stoned to death by the order of a Jew, of the sect of Saducees, and not by that of a Roman. The Jews ‡ put St. Stephen to death; and though St. Paul guarded the cloaths of the executioners, it was not in the character of a Roman citizen.

The first Christians had nothing to do with the Romans; their enemies were the Jews, from whom they were gradually separating themselves. We

* Acts. Chap. xxxv.

† Acts. Chap. xxxvi. ver. 34.

‡ Though the Jews had not the power of giving judgment in criminal cases, since Archelaus was driven among the Allobroges, and Judea became a province of the empire, the Romans, however connived at them, when precipitated into such a judgment by zeal; i. e. when in a sudden tumult, excited by religious frenzy, they stoned a man to death, whom they imagined to have blasphemed.

know the implacable hatred of sectaries against those who abandon their sect. There were tumults without doubt in the synagogues at Rome. Suetonius, in the life of Claudius, says, *Judæos, impulsore Christo, assidue tumultuentes Roma expulit*; "He drove out the Jews, who were raising tumults at the instigation of Christ." He was deceived in saying, at the instigation of Christ: but he might not be informed of particular occurrences and their causes, among a people so contemptible as the Jews at Rome; he was acquainted, however, with the general occasion of the commotions he referred to. Suetonius wrote in the reign of Adrian, and in the second century of the Christian æra. The Romans did not at that time distinguish between the Jews and the Christians. This passage in Suetonius is so far from proving that the Romans oppressed the first Christians, that it shews they restrained and kept in order the Jews who persecuted them. They required the Jewish synagogue should have the same indulgence for those who separated from it, as the senate shewed to the Jews, and suffered those who had been banished to return into the city. They acquired public honours, according to Dion Cassius, and Ulpian,* notwithstanding the laws which excluded them. Can it be imagined, that after the destruction of Jerusalem, the emperors should have bestowed dignities on Jews, and yet should have persecuted, delivered up to executioners, and wild beasts, those Christians which they regarded as belonging to a Jewish sect?

It is said, that Nero persecuted them. Tacitus says, they were accused of having set fire to Rome, and that they were abandoned to the fury of the populace. But what had such an accusation to do with their faith? Nothing. Shall we say, that the Chinese, who were put to death by the Dutch in the

* Ulpianus---tit. ii. *Eis qui Judaicam superstitionem sequuntur honores adipisci permiserunt, &c.*

suburbs of Batavia, were sacrificed to religion? Whatever inclination we have to deceive ourselves, we shall find it difficult to attribute to intolerance the disaster which, under Nero, befell some unhappy people who were half-Jews, half-Christians.

Tacitus says, *Quos per flagitia invisos vulgus Christianus appellabat*,

The appellation of Christian was then hardly known at Rome. Tacitus lived in the reigns of Vespasian and Domitian. He spoke of the Christians in the common language of the times. I would venture to say, that the words, *odio humani generis convicti*, may signify in the style of Tacitus, "convicted of being hated by mankind," instead of "convicted of hating mankind." In effect, what did these first missionaries at Rome? They endeavoured to gain some souls; taught them the purest morality; they never excited seditions against the magistrates; the humility of their hearts, as well as of their condition, was extreme; they were hardly known, for they were hardly separated from the Jews. How should mankind hate, while they were ignorant of them? And how could they be convicted of hating mankind?

The fire of London was attributed to the Catholics; but this was after religious wars; after the gun-powder-plot, in which it was proved some Catholics had been concerned.

The first Christians in the time of Nero, were not assuredly in the same circumstances. It is very difficult to penetrate the obscurities of history. Tacitus does not give us any reason for a suspicion that Nero himself should wish to reduce Rome to ashes. We might suspect with more probability, that Charles the Second set fire to London. The blood of a king, his father, who was executed on a public scaffold, and whose death was required by the people, might have furnished an excuse for Charles the Second. But Nero had neither excuse, pretence, nor interest. Such foolish rumours have had credit
among

among the people of all nations. We have had some in our times, as idle, and as unjust.

Tacitus who understood so well the disposition of princes, ought also to have known that of the people; who are always vain; always outrageous in their hasty opinions; incapable of seeing any thing; but capable of saying any thing, of believing any thing, and of forgetting every thing.

Philo says, *Sejanus persecuted them* (in the reign of Tiberius) *but after the death of Sejanus, the emperor re-established them in their rights.* They had those of Roman citizens, greatly as they were despised by the citizens of Rome. They partook at the public distributions of corn; and when those distributions were made on their sabbath, their allotment was given them on another day. This was probably in consideration of sums of money with which they had furnished the state. Men have always purchased the blessings of toleration; and they have soon been indemnified whatever it has cost them.

This passage in Philo explains that in Tacitus, where it is said, that four thousand Jews or Egyptians were sent into Sardinia, and if the climate should destroy them it would be a trifling loss, *vile damnum.*

I would add that Philo regards Tiberius as a wise and a just prince. I imagine he was just only when it suited his interest. But the language of Philo makes me doubt a little of those horrible accounts which Tacitus and Suetonius give of him. It does not appear probable to me, that an infirm man, at the age of seventy, should retire into the Isle of Caprea, to indulge in debaucheries, which are barely possible to be committed, and which were unknown to the most licentious youth of Rome. Neither Tacitus or Suetonius had the least knowledge of that emperor; they collected popular rumours, at their own discretion and pleasure. Octavius, Tiberius, and their successors, had been exposed to public odium, because they governed a people accustomed to liberty.

liberty. Historians had a pleasure and an interest in defaming them; and they were credited, because the people could not have recourse to memoirs, journals, and documents. Those historians never cite authorities; they could not be contradicted; they defamed whom they pleased, and fixed at their pleasure the opinion and judgment of posterity. The judicious reader will see, with what distrust we should peruse the works of those historians; what credit should be given to public facts attested by grave and considerate writers; and what boundaries should be set to our credulity on anecdotes, which those authors have related, without producing any authority or proof.

CHAP. IX.

Of Martyrs.

SOME time afterwards, there were Christian martyrs. It is difficult to know exactly the reasons for which these martyrs were condemned. But I dare believe, that, under the first Cæsars, none of them were condemned for religion alone. All Christians were tolerated; it is not therefore probable, that obscure individuals would be sought out on account of some peculiar circumstances in their worship, at a time when all kinds of religion were permitted.

A Titus, a Trajan, an Antoninus, a Decius, cannot be deemed barbarian. Is it to be imagined, they would deprive the Christians of a liberty which was enjoyed by all the world? The Christians were not the only people who could be charged with having mysteries. Those of Isis; those of Mithras; and those of the Syrian Goddess, though extremely different from the Roman worship, were all connived at and allowed. Persecution must have had other causes;

causes; and the hatred of individuals was supported by some reasons of state, in shedding the blood of the first Christians.

For example, when St. Lawrence refused to give up to Cornelius Secularius, the Roman prefect, some money in his possession, belonging to the Christians, it was natural to expect the resentment of the prefect and of the emperor. They did not know that St. Lawrence had distributed the money amongst the poor, and had thereby performed an holy and charitable action; they considered him as refractory and seditious, and ordered him to be put to death.

We undoubtedly respect whatever the church has rendered respectable; and we invoke the holy martyrs. But while we reverence St. Lawrence, we may entertain doubts on the following circumstances—that St. Sixtus should have said to him, *You will follow me in three days*; that in the interval, the Roman prefect required of him the money in his hands belonging to the Christians; that the deacon (Lawrence) assembled all the poor of the city, and conducted the prefect to see them; that he was brought to his trial, and put to the torture; that the prefect commanded a smith to make a gridiron large enough to broil a man upon; that a Roman magistrate of the first dignity should assist in person at so strange a punishment; that St. Lawrence on the gridiron should say, “I am sufficiently broiled on one side; turn me on the other, if you design to eat me.” That punishment of the gridiron is not in the Roman manner. Besides, how has it happened, that no heathen historian has spoken of these adventures?

Let us consider the martyrdom of St. Polyeuctes. Can it be said, that he was condemned for religion alone? He goes into a temple, where the people were giving thanks to the gods for the victory of the Emperor Decius; he insults those who were sacrificing, and demolishes the altars and the statues.

In

In what country in the world would such conduct be pardoned? The Christian who publicly tore the edict of the Emperor Dioclesian, and who drew on his brethren the persecution they endured in the two last years of that prince's reign, had not zeal according to knowledge, and was the unhappy cause of the misfortune of his party. That inconsiderate zeal which often broke out, and which was condemned by many fathers of the church, has been in all probability the occasion that the Christians were persecuted.

It is true, that the first Sacramentarians should not be compared to the first Christians; for error should not be compared with truth. But Farel, the forerunner of John Calvin, did at Arles the same thing which St. Polyeuctes did in Armenia. There was a procession in the streets, in which the statue of St. Anthony the hermit was carried. Farel, assisted by some of his disciples, fell on the monks who carried St. Anthony, beat them, dispersed them, and threw St. Anthony into the river. He deserved death; which he escaped by flight. If he had cried out to those monks, that he did not believe a raven had carried half a loaf of bread to St. Anthony the hermit, or that St. Anthony had conversed with centaurs and satyrs, he would have deserved to be severely reprimanded for disturbing the public order: but if, in the evening after the procession, he had coolly and peaceably examined the history of the *raven*, the *centaurs*, and *satyrs*, no person could have justly blamed him.

How is it to be credited, that the Romans, who suffered the infamous Antinous to be placed among the gods, should have torn in pieces, and delivered to wild beasts, persons, whom they could reproach only with peaceably adoring the true God? How is it to be supposed, that the Romans, who acknowledged a Supreme God,* the sovereign, the master of all secondary

* In Virgil we clearly see, that the Romans acknowledged a Supreme God, the sovereign of all celestial beings.

condary deities, of which the form of addressing this Deity is an attestation, *Deus optimus maximus*, should persecute those whose worship was directed to the one God?

It is not credible, that there should have been an inquisition established under the emperors on account of the Christians; I mean that persons should be commissioned to interrogate them on the subject of their belief. The Romans never molested on this account either Jews, Syrians, Egyptians, Bards, Druids, or Philosophers. The martyrs then were those who attempted to discredit and to destroy false gods. It was a wise and pious thing not to believe in them: but if, not content with worshipping God in spirit and in truth, they inveighed violently against the established worship, however absurd it may have been, we are obliged to confess, that the martyrs themselves were the persons guilty of intolerance.

*O! quis res hominumque deumque
Æternis regis imperiis, & fulmine terras,
O Pater, ô hominum divumque æterna potestas, &c.*

Horace expresses himself in a stronger manner.

*Unde nihil majus generatur ipso,
Nec igit quidquam simile, aut secundum.*

The unity of God was the subject of their chanting in those mysteries, into which almost all the Romans were initiated. See the beautiful hymn of Orpheus; read Maximus of Modaurum's letter to Augustin; in which he says, "that they must be persons of very ordinary understandings, who cannot discern the Supreme God." Longinus, who was a Pagan, writes to the same St. Augustin, that "God is one, incomprehensible, ineffable." Lactantius himself, who cannot be said to have too much candour, confesses in his fifth book, "that the Romans subjected all their divinities to a Supreme God."—*Illos subijcet & mancipat Deo*. Even Tertullian, in his apology, says, that all the empire acknowledged a God, the sovereign of the world, whose power and majesty are infinite, *principem mundi perfectæ potentæ & majestatis*. Look particularly into Plato, the master of Cicero in philosophy, and you will see it to be his opinion, *there is but one God, whom we should adore, love, and endeavour to resemble by holiness and justice*. Epictetus in slavery, and Antoninus on a throne, say the same things in an hundred places.

Ter-

Tertullian, in his apology,* confesses that the Christians were regarded as factious; the accusation was unjust, but it serves to prove, that it was not religion only, which excited the zeal of the magistrates against the Christians. He says,† the Christians refused to adorn their doors with branches of laurel on days of public rejoicings for the victories of the emperors. This blameable affectation might be interpreted into disaffection and treason.

The first judicial severities exercised against the Christians, were those ordered by Domitian: but he limited them to an year's exile. Tertullian says of him, *facile captum repressit restitutis quos ipse relegaverat*. Lactantius,‡ whose language is so pompous and extravagant, allows, that from the reign of Domitian to that of Decius, the church flourished in peace. This long tranquility, he says, was interrupted, when that execrable animal Decius oppressed the church: *post multos annos extitit execrabile animal Decius qui vexaret ecclesiam*.

It is not intended here, to discuss the opinion of the learned Dodwel, on the small number of Christian martyrs. But if the Romans were so violent in their persecution of Christians; if the senate ordered many innocent persons among them to die by unusual tortures; if they plunged these people into boiling oil; if they exposed their daughters naked in the circus, to be destroyed by wild beasts; how came they to suffer the first bishops of Rome to live in peace? St. Ireneus reckons only one martyr, called Telesphorus, among the bishops, in the year 139 of the vulgar æra; and there is no proof that Telesphorus was put to death. Zephyrinus superintended the Christians at Rome eighteen years, and died in peace, in the year 219. It is true, the ancient martyrologists have placed almost all the first popes in their

* Chap. xxx.

† Chap. xxxv.

‡ Chap. iii.

list:

list : but the word *martyr* was then understood according to its real signification; *martyr* signifying one who bore *testimony* and not *punishment*.

It is difficult to reconcile the belief that the Christians were furiously persecuted, with the testimony of their ecclesiastical writers, who have described them in the enjoyment of so much liberty, that they assembled fifty-five councils in the three first centuries.

They certainly were persecuted : but if with the violence which is commonly apprehended, how came Tertullian, who wrote with so much energy against the established worship, to die peaceably in his bed ? We may suppose the emperors did not read his apology ; that an obscure book, written in Africa, could hardly reach those who were charged with the government of the world : but it was probably known to those who had access to the proconsul in Africa ; it must have excited indignation and hatred against the author ; and yet he did not suffer martyrdom.

Origen taught publicly in Alexandria, and was not put to death. The same man, who spoke with so much freedom to Pagans and to Christians ; who announced Jesus to the former, and denied the Trinity to the latter, expressly declares in his third book against Celsus, " that there were but few martyrs, " and that they had suffered at considerable distances " of time from each other ; however, the Christians " neglect nothing to induce the world to embrace " their religion, for they resort with eagerness for " that purpose to cities, towns and villages."

These continual journeyings were plausibly represented as seditious, by the Pagan priests ; the Christian missions, however, were tolerated even in Egypt, where the people were ever turbulent, seditious, and disposed to mean and unworthy actions ; where a Roman had been put to death for having killed a cat ; and where the national character has never risen
above

above contempt, whatever has been said of it by those who admire pyramids.*

Could

* This assertion should be proved. It must be granted, that since history has taken place of fable, the Egyptians have appeared a wretched as well as a superstitious, people. Cambyfes took possession of Egypt by a single battle. Alexander gave laws to it without the risque and trouble of a battle or a siege. The Ptolemies possessed themselves of it without striking a blow. Cæsar and Augustus subdued it with the same ease. Omar took possession of all Egypt in one campaign. The Mammelucs, a people of Colchos, and the neighbourhood of Mount Caucasus, were its masters after Omar. They were Mammelucs, and not Egyptians, who defeated the army of St. Louis, and took that king prisoner. When the Mammelucs degenerated into Egyptians, i. e. became effeminate, dastardly, volatile, like the natives of the climate, Selim I. conquered them in three months, ordered their sultan to be hanged, and annexed the province to the empire of the Turks, until other barbarians may possess themselves of it.

Herodotus says, that in fabulous times, an Egyptian king, called Sefostris, marched out of his kingdom, with the professed design of conquering the world. Such a design is worthy of a Pycrocol or a Don Quixote. And without laying any stress on the circumstance, that Sefostris is not an Egyptian name, the event itself, as well as those incidents which are said to have preceded it, are in the stile and nature of those related in *the thousand and one nights*. Nothing is more common in conquered countries, than to write fables on the ancient grandeur of the inhabitants; as in others, we find certain miserable families, who affect to be descended from princes. The priests of Egypt told Herodotus, that the king, whom he calls Sefostris, marched from Egypt to the conquest of Colchos; as if we should say, that a king of France marched from Touraine to the conquest of Norway.

These tales are not the more probable, for having been repeated in a thousand different volumes. It is much more likely, that the robust and fierce inhabitants of Caucasus, and other Scythians, who have so often ravaged Asia, should penetrate as far as Egypt. And if the priests of Colchos should have carried on them the marks of circumcision, it is no proof that they have been under the dominion of the Egyptians. Diodorus Siculus says, that all the kings conquered by Sefostris quitted their dominions once every year; brought their tribute to him; that Sefostris put them as horses to his chariot, and obliged them to draw him to the temple. These *Tales of Gargantua* are copied daily and with great fidelity. We must imagine these kings to have been very good, to come from such distances to serve Sefostris as horses.

Could it be wondered, than any priesthood, or any government, should be instigated against St. Gregory Taumatargos, the disciple of Origen? Gregory had, in the night, seen an old man sent immediately by God; he was accompanied by a woman resplendent with glory. The woman was the Holy Virgin; the man was St. John the Evangelist. St. John instructed St. Gregory in some symbols, and St. Gregory set out on his mission. As he was going to Neocesarea, he came to a temple where oracles were given, and the rain obliged him to pass the night in it. He employed himself in making seve-

As to the *pyramids*, and other ancient monuments, they prove that the early kings of Egypt were proud and without taste, and that the people in slavery employed their hands, their only talents, in aiding the barbarous ostentation of their masters. The government, at its most celebrated periods, was absurd and tyrannical. The Egyptians have pretended, that all the world belonged to their monarchs. It must be likely, that slaves should have conquered the world!

The profound science of the Egyptian priests, is another of the ridiculous enormities of ancient history; i. e. of ancient fable. Philosophers who pretended, that in eleven thousand years, the sun had twice changed its course, and had risen in the west and set in the east, were certainly below the author of the Almanac of Liege. The religion of these priests, who governed the state, was not comparable to that of the most savage Americans. It is said, they adored crocodiles, monkeys, cats and onions; and, excepting that of the Grand Lama, there is nothing now on earth so absurd as the Egyptian worship.

Their arts are not superior to their religion. There is but one ancient Egyptian statue which is tolerable; and those statues which are to be seen in Egypt, and to be deemed to have any merit, were made at Alexandria by Greek artists, under the protection of the Ptolemies and the Cæsars. They were even taught geometry by a Greek.

The illustrious Bossuet is warmed into an extasy on the merit of the Egyptians, in his *Discourse on Universal History*, addressed to the son of Louis XIV. This might dazzle a young prince, but gave no satisfaction to the learned; it is an eloquent declamation; but an historian should be more a philosopher than an orator.

These reflections on the Egyptians are offered as conjectures. And, indeed, what other appellation can be given to every thing that is said on the subject of antiquity?

ral signs of the cross. In the morning, the priest who presided at the sacrifices, was astonished that the demons who had been accustomed to answer him, would not pronounce the oracles. He summoned them; the devils appeared, to let him know they would not come any more; they told him, it was impossible they should again reside in that temple; for that Gregory had lodged a night in it, and charmed it by making signs of the cross. The priest ordered Gregory to be apprehended; who replied to his enquiries, "I can drive out demons at my pleasure, from any place; and I can make them enter wherever I choose." "Make them return to my temple then," said the priest. Gregory tore off a part of a little book he had in his hand, and wrote on it the following words. "Gregory to Satan—I command thee to re-enter the temple." This *billet* was placed upon the altar; the devils obeyed; the oracles were given us usual on that day; after which, it is well known, they totally ceased.

It is St. Gregory of Nyssa who relates these facts in his life of St. Gregory Taumaturgos. The priests of idolatry had certainly good reasons to be angry with Gregory; and in their blind fury, it was to be expected, they would bring him before a magistrate: but this formidable enemy did not suffer persecution.

It is said, in the history of St. Cyprian, that he was the first bishop of Carthage who suffered death. The martyrdom of St. Cyprian was in the 258th year of our æra; which points out the time which elapsed before a bishop of Carthage was put to death. History doth not inform us, what calumnies were invented against Cyprian; what enemies he had; or why the proconsul of Africa was disposed to punish him? St. Cyprian writes to Cornelius, bishop of Rome, "A popular commotion has been occasioned lately at Carthage; and the clamour has been, that I should be cast to the lions." It is very probable,

bable, that the fury of the people of Carthage was the cause of St. Cyprian's death; and it is certain, that the Emperor Gallus could not have condemned for religion a man at such a distance, when he suffered Cornelius to live peaceably at Rome.

So many secret causes often blend themselves with the apparent cause; there may be so many concealed motives to persecute a man; that future ages may find it impossible to discover the source of calamities to the most considerable characters; much more, that of the punishment of an individual, who was known only to his own party.

We are to observe, that St. Gregory Taumaturgos and St. Dennis, bishop of Alexandria, lived unmolested in the time of St. Cyprian. How came it to pass, that these persons, who were as well known as the bishop of Carthage, discharged the duties of their offices in peace? And how came St. Cyprian to be punished? Is it not probable, that the latter sunk under the weight and influence of personal and powerful enemies; of calumny; of political pretences, which are often called in to the aid of religion; and that the others had the happiness to escape the malice and wickedness of mankind?

It was hardly possible, that the meer accusation of being a Christian, should have been the cause of the death of St. Ignatius, under the just and merciful Trajan; for the Christians were suffered to accompany and comfort him, when he was brought to Rome.* Several seditions had arisen at Antioch; a city

* We would not call in question the death of St. Ignatius: but on reading the history of his martyrdom, a man of discernment and understanding will feel some doubts arise in his mind. The unknown author of that account says, "Trajan imagined that a material circumstance would be wanting to his glory, if he did not subject the God of the Christians to his dominion." What an idea! Was Trajan a man who would entertain the thought of triumphing over gods? When Ignatius appeared before the emperor, it is said, this prince cried out to him, "Who art thou, impure

city which had been often turbulent, and where St. Ignatius exercised secretly the office of a Christian bishop. It is very possible, that these seditions, which were maliciously imputed to the innocent Christians, drew the attention of government, and the magistrates were deceived, as is often the case.

St. Simeon, for example, was accused before Sapor, as a Roman spy. We are told, in the history of his martyrdom, that Sapor proposed he should worship the sun : but we know, the Persians did not worship that luminary ; they regarded it as the emblem of that beneficent principle which they called Oromases, or Orosmales, the Supreme Creator whom they adored.

However

“ impure spirit ? ” It is not at all probable, that an emperor would have spoken to a prisoner, or pronounced his condemnation. It was not the custom of the emperors. If Trajan ordered Ignatius to come into his presence, he did not say to him, “ Who art thou ? ” for he must have known. The phrase, “ impure spirit,” was not likely to be used by such a man as Trajan. We may easily perceive it to be the expression of an exorcist, which a Christian has put into the mouth of an emperor. Good God ! Can this be supposed to be the style of Trajan ?

Can it also be believed, that Ignatius should have answered, that he was called Theophorus, because he carried Jesus in his heart, and that Trajan discoursed with him on the subject of Jesus Christ ? Trajan is made to say, at the end of the conversation, “ We command that Ignatius, who glories in bearing in his heart the *crucified* (Jesus) be put in irons, &c.” A sophist, at enmity with the Christians, might have called Jesus Christ, *the crucified*, but it is not probable that such a term should be used in a sentence delivered by an emperor. The punishment of the cross was so much in use among the Romans, that in the language of the law, *the crucified* would not be a phrase to point out the peculiar object of the Christian worship ; and it was not in this manner that the laws or the emperors pronounced their judgments.

A long letter is said to have been afterwards written by St. Ignatius to the Christians at Rome : “ I am desirous of writing to “ to you, chained as I am.” If he was permitted to write in this general manner to the Christians at Rome, those Christians could not have been forced to hide themselves, or to keep their faith a secret ; Trajan could not have had the design of submitting their

However candid we may wish to be, it is impossible to avoid indignation against those declaimers, who accuse Diocletian of having persecuted the Christians, from the time he ascended the imperial throne. The testimony of Eusebius of Cesarea cannot be rejected on this occasion. He was the favorite, the panegyrist of Constantine, and a violent enemy of the preceding emperors. He should certainly be believed, when he justifies those emperors. The following are his own words :* “ The emperors, for
 “ some time, gave the Christians great marks of
 “ good-will; they confided in their care of pro-
 “ vinces; many Christians lived in the imperial pa-
 “ lace; the emperors were even married to Chri-
 “ stians. Diocletian was espoused to Prisca, whose
 “ daughter was married to Maximinian Galerius,”
 &c.

We should learn from such testimony on this subject to avoid calumny; and should rather suspect, that the persecution excited by Galerius, who had reigned eighteen years with clemency and beneficence, was owing to some intrigue, of which we have no knowledge.

their God to his power: for, if they had been under the rod of persecution, Ignatius was guilty of great imprudence in writing to them; it was the certain method of exposing them, of delivering them up, and even of becoming an informer against them.

Those who have arranged these actions and circumstances should have had greater regard to probability, and to the agreement of one thing with another. The account given of the martyrdom of St. Polycarp, is apt to suggest further doubts. It is said, that a voice from heaven was heard, crying out, “ Courage, Polycarp!” that the Christians heard it, but that others who attended did not. It is also said, that when Polycarp was tied to the stake, and the pile was on fire, the flames divided so as to avoid him; that they formed an arch over his head; that a dove issued from it; that the saint exhaled an aromatic odour, which was communicated to the persons of the whole assembly; but though he was so respected by the fire, that it would not approach him, he could not resist the edge of a sword. We must pardon those who find more piety than truth in these stories.

* Hist. Eccles. b. viii.

We must see, that the story of the *Theban Legion*, said to have been wholly massacred for religion, is an absurd fable. It is ridiculous to suppose, that the legion was sent from Asia by means of the great St. Bernard; it is impossible it should have been sent for to quell a sedition in Gaul a year after it had actually been quelled; it is not less impossible, that six thousand infantry and seven hundred cavalry should have been all put to death, in a desile, where two hundred men might have defeated a whole army. The account of that pretended act of butchery begins with an evident imposture; *while the earth groaned under the tyranny of Diocletian, heaven seemed to be peopled with martyrs*. This adventure, as it is related, is imagined to have happened in the year 286, when the Christians were most in favor with Diocletian, and when the Roman empire was in a state of the greatest felicity. But what ought to put an end to all these discussions is, that there never has been a Theban legion. The Romans were too haughty and wise, to form a legion of those Egyptians who served in Rome only as slaves, *verna canopi*: it would have been like having a Jewish legion. We have the names of thirty-two legions, which constituted the principal forces of the Roman empire; the Theban legion is not found amongst them. We must rank this tale with the acrostic verses of the Sybils, which foretold the miracles of Jesus Christ; and with other factitious pieces, which false zeal has dispersed to impose upon credulity.

CHAP. X.

The Danger of false Legends; and of Persecution.

Falsehood hath too long imposed on mankind. It is time we should be made acquainted with the few truths which can be discovered through those clouds

clouds of fables which have obscured the Roman history since the times of Tacitus and Suetonius, and which have almost always enveloped the annals of all other ancient nations.

For example. How is it possible to believe, that the Romans, a people of sober and severe morals, and to whose prudence we owe our laws, should have condemned to prostitution, Christian virgins, who were the daughters of noble parents? To give credit to this imputation, we must be but little acquainted with the austerity of our masters in legislation, who punished so severely the weaknesses of their vestals. The *Actes sinceres* of Ruinart relate those enormities: but are we to give credit to the *Acts of Ruinart*, as we do to the *Acts of the Apostles*? Those *Sincere Acts* say, after Bollandus, that in the city of Aneira, there were seven Christian virgins at the age of seventy; that the governor Theodectes condemned them to submit to the embraces of young men; but that these virgins having escaped violation (for good reasons) he obliged them to officiate naked at the mysteries of Diana; where, however, the women never assisted, without being covered even with a veil. St. Theodotus, who was in fact an inn-keeper, but not the less zealous on that account, prayed ardently to God, that those virgins might be suffered to die, lest they should yield to the temptation. God heard his prayer. The governor ordered them to be thrown into a lake, with a stone fastened to their necks. They soon appeared to Theodotus, and prayed *he would not suffer their bodies to be eaten by fishes*. These were their own words.

The holy publican and his companions went by night to the borders of the lake, which was guarded by soldiers, a heavenly flambeaux going always before them. When they came to the place where the guards were on duty, a celestial knight, armed at all points, put the soldiers to flight with his lance. St.

Theodotus drew up the bodies of the virgins, and took them with him; he was summoned before the governor; and the celestial knight did not prevent his head's being taken off. We have the greatest veneration for real martyrs: but we have difficulties in believing this story of Bollandus and of Ruinart.

Is it necessary to relate here the tale of young St. Romanus? He was thrown into the fire; and the Jews who were present, insulted the name of Jesus Christ, who suffered his martyrs to be burnt; whereas God had delivered Shadrac, Meshac, and Abednego out of the fiery furnace. The Jews had hardly spoken, when St. Romanus marched triumphantly from the burning pile. The emperor ordered that he should be pardoned; and told the judge, that he wished to have no further differences with God: (strange words for Diocletian.) The judge, notwithstanding the emperor's orders, commanded the tongue of St. Romanus to be cut out; and though he had executioners in his service, he desired the operation might be performed by a surgeon. The young Romanus, who was born with an impediment in his speech, spoke with volubility after his tongue was cut out. The surgeon was reprimanded; and to shew that the operation was made according to the rules of art, he seized a passenger, and cut off as much of his tongue as he had of that of St. Romanus; the poor man died on the spot; because, says the author very learnedly, "anatomy teaches us, that a man without a tongue cannot live." In truth, if Eusebius has written such foolish things; if they have not been added to his works; what credit can be given to his history?

We have an account of the martyrdom of St. Felicity, and of her seven children; condemned, as it is said, by the wise and pious Antoninus; but the author of this account has not put his name to it. It is very probable, that some writer, who had more zeal than regard for truth, wished to imitate the history

story of Maccabees; for he begins his account in the same manner: *St. Felicity was a Roman; she lived in the reign of Antoninus*: it is clear, that the author was not contemporary with St. Felicity. He said, the prætor sat in judgment on her in the *campus martius*; which, though it had been used to hold the comitia, served only to review the troops, for races, and military games. This circumstance alone would prove the imposture.

It is also said, that after judgment was given, the emperor ordered different judges to see it executed; which is wholly contrary to all the forms of those times, and indeed to those of all other times.

We have a St. Hypolitus, who is said to have been drawn asunder by horses, in the same manner with Hypolitus, the son of Theseus. That punishment was never in use among the ancient Romans; and the similitude of the name alone, gave rise to the fable.

We are also to observe, that in the accounts of martyrdoms, which the Christians themselves have given us, it is said, that great numbers of the same faith were suffered to visit their friends in prisons; that they accompanied them to the places of execution; procured some of their blood; buried their bodies, and performed miracles with their relicks. If religion had been the object of public resentment, would not those who declared themselves Christians, by assisting their condemned brethren, have been taken notice of as offenders; especially, as they might have been accused of performing enchantments with the remains of the martyrs? Would they not have been treated in the same manner we have treated the Vaudois, the Albigenes, the Hussites, and the different sects of Protestants? We have cut their throats, burnt them in multitudes, without distinction either of age or sex. In any plausible accounts which are given of the ancient persecutions, are there events which, in point of cruelty, bear any resemblance to the affair of St. Bartholomew or the *Irish massacres*?
Are

Are there any which may be compared to the annual festival, which is celebrated at Toulouse; a festival so cruel and savage, that it should be for ever abolished; a festival in which a whole people form a joyful procession, and thank God, that two hundred years ago, four thousand of their citizens were put to death?

I say it with horror; but I say it with truth; that we—Christians—are the people who have been persecutors, executioners, and assassins! And of whom? Of our brethren. We have destroyed a hundred cities with a crucifix or a Bible in our hands; and we have taken no respite in shedding of blood, from the reign of Constantine to the ravages of those cannibals who inhabited the Cevennes; ravages which, thank God, are no longer exercised.

We now and then send to the gallows some poor wretches of Poitou, of Vivarais, of Valence, of Montauban. Since the year 1745, we have hanged eight persons of those called *preachers* or *ministers of the Gospel*; who had been guilty of no crime, but that of having prayed for the king in bad French, and giving a little bread and wine to a few weak peasants. Those things are not known or talked of at Paris; where pleasure is the only object of importance, and where events in the provinces and out of the kingdom are disregarded. The proceedings against those unfortunate people are carried on in a summary manner; more so, than in the case of a deserter. If the king were informed of their pretended guilt, he would pardon them.

The priests of the Catholic religion are not treated in this manner in any Protestant country. There are more than a hundred priests of this profession in England and Ireland; they are known; and they are suffered to live peaceably even in time of war.

Are we always to be the last, in embracing the salutary opinions of other nations? They have corrected their errors on this subject; when shall we
correct

correct ours? Sixty years passed before we adopted truths which had been demonstrated by Newton. We are beginning with reluctance to think of saving the lives of our children by inoculation. The real principles of agriculture were unknown to us till lately. But when shall we act on the real principles of humanity? With what face can we reproach Pagans with the martyrdom of saints, when we have been guilty of the same cruelty in the same circumstances?

Let it be granted, that the Romans put to death a multitude of Christians for religion alone. In that case, they were extremely blameable. Are we therefore to commit the same injustice? And while we reproach them with having persecuted, are we also to become persecutors?

If a man could be found so destitute of principle, and so truly fanatic, as to say—Wherefore would you develop our errors and faults? Why should you wish to discredit our false miracles and false legends? They are the aliment which supports the piety of many people. There are errors which may be necessary. Do not tear out of the body an inveterate ulcer, which may be the means of keeping it alive. I answer—

All those false miracles, by which you induce men to doubt those which are real; all those absurd legends which you add to the truths of the gospel, extinguish all sentiments of religion in the heart. Many persons desirous of being instructed, and not having leisure to be fully informed, say—The oracles of my religion have deceived me; there is, therefore, no religion. It is much better that we should throw ourselves into the arms of nature, than into the clutches of error. We may depend with more security on the laws of nature, than on the inventions of men. Others have the misfortune to go further. They have seen that imposture would have lain them under restraints; they throw off even the restraints

straints of truth ; and have recourse to atheism : they become depraved, because others have been deceitful and cruel.

These are the certain consequences of all pious frauds, and of all superstitions. Ordinary men adopt reasons only by halves. It is a wretched argument—that Voraginus, the author of the *Golden Legend*, and the Jesuit Ribadeneira, compiler of the *Fleur de Saints*, have written only absurdities ; therefore there is no God : Catholics have cut the throats of a certain number of Huguenots ; and Huguenots in their turn have assassinated a certain number of Catholics ; therefore there is no God : men have made use of confession, the holy communion, and of all the sacraments, to commit the most horrible crimes ; therefore there is no God. I should conclude, on the contrary, therefore, there is a God, who after this transitory life, in which we have run into so many errors, and committed so many crimes in his name, will have the goodness to console us for such dreadful misfortunes : for, considering our religious wars ; forty schisms occasioned by popes, which have been generally bloody ; impostures which have often had fatal consequences ; irreconcilable hatred occasioned by different opinions ; and all the evils brought on by false zeal ; men have been a great while in hell in this life.

CHAP. XI.

The Effects of Intolerance.

BUT, it may be objected, are we to permit every citizen to believe only in the conclusions of his own reason, and to think according to its suggestions whether true or false ? Certainly,* if the public

* See Locke's excellent Letter on Toleration.

peace be not disturbed. For it is not in the power of man to believe or not believe : but it is in his power to respect the customs of his country. And if you say, it is a crime, not to believe in the established religion, you accuse the first christians who have been the parents of your faith, and you justify those whom you have accused of having persecuted them.

You will answer, that the difference is very great ; that the various religions which have prevailed are the inventions of men ; and that the catholic, apostolic, Roman church alone, is of God. But is it common-sense, because our religion is divine, it should reign by means of hatred and fury ; by exiles, plunder, imprisonments, tortures, murders, and by acts of thanksgiving to God that we have been enabled to commit these murders ? The more reason we have to think the christian religion divine, the less right we can claim to force it on others ; if God be its author, he will support its credit. You well know that intolerance produces only hypocrites or rebels. What a dreadful alternative ? In short, would you maintain by means of executioners, the religion of a God, whom executioners put to death, and who exhorted his followers to patience and mildness ?

Consider, I beseech you, the dreadful consequences of intolerance. If it were permitted to deprive a private citizen of his property, to throw him into prison, or to put him to death ; because in such a degree of latitude, he did not profess the same religion which was professed in that latitude ; by what reason would the principal magistrates of a state, be exempted from these inconveniencies and injuries ? Religion binds equally the monarch and the beggar ; and indeed, above fifty doctors or monks have given their sanction to that shocking opinion, that it is lawful to depose and to put to death those sovereigns who do not think as prescribed by the
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established church. The parliaments of the kingdom have seen the necessity of taking pains to proscribe those abominable decisions of abominable theologians.*

The ground was reeking with the blood of Henry the Great, when the parliament of Paris issued a decree, establishing the independance of the crown as

* The Jesuit Busambaum, who is explained by the Jesuit La Croix, says, "It is lawful to kill a prince who is excommunicated by the pope, wherever that prince may be found; for the universe belongs to the pope: and the man who accepts a commission of this kind, is engaged in the most charitable employment." It is this opinion, invented in the recesses of hell, which has so often rendered the Jesuits detestable in France. They have been reproached, on some occasions, with this dogma so often taught by them, and so often disavowed. They have attempted to justify themselves, by shewing opinions of nearly the same import in the works of St. Thomas, and of many Dominicans. (See, if you can find it, a letter from a man of the world to a Theologian; a pamphlet written by a Jesuit, in 1762.) St. Thomas de Aquinas, the angelic doctor, the interpreter of the divine will, (these are his titles) maintains in effect, that an apostate prince loses his right to his throne, and that he ought not to be obeyed; (Book II. part ii. q. 12.) that the church may punish him with death; that the Emperor Julian was suffered to live, because the Christians were not powerful enough to risque the danger of his murder; that every heretic should be put to death; (Q. 11, 12.) that those who deliver a people from the power of a prince who reigns tyrannically, are extremely commendable, &c. &c. We may respect this angel of the schools: but if he had been in France to maintain these propositions, in the times of his brother Jacques Clement, and of the friar Ravillac; how would the angel of the schools have been treated?

It must be owned, Jean Gerson, chancellor of the university, went farther than St. Thomas, and the Cordelier Jean Petit much farther than Gerson. Several Cordeliers supported the horrible theses of Jean Petit. This diabolical doctrine of regicide arose from the foolish idea which almost all the monks have entertained, that the pope is a god upon earth, who can dispose according to his pleasure of the thrones and lives of kings. We have been, in regard to this matter, much below the Tartars, who believe the Grand Lama to be immortal. He distributes among them the contents of his night-chair; they dry and deposit them in cases, and kiss them with great devotion. For myself, I had much rather wear those relicks round my neck, than to believe that the pope has the least right over the possessions of princes, or even of my own, in whatever state they may chance to be.

a fundamental principle. The Cardinal Du Perron, who was indebted for the purple to Henry the Great, set himself in opposition to this decree in his jurisdiction, and suppressed it. All the journals of those times have preserved the words which Du Perron made use of in his harrangues : *If, says he, a prince becomes an Arian, it is a duty to depose him.*

No, Monf. le Cardinal, I would not adopt your chimerical supposition. If one of our kings, on reading the histories of councils and fathers, should have his attention drawn to the words, *My father is greater than I am*; should understand them literally; and after ballancing between the council of Nice and that of Constantinople, should declare in favour of Eusebius of Nicomedia, I would nevertheless obey my king; I should not think myself the less bound by the oath I had taken; and if you should rebel against him, and I be one of your judges, I would pronounce you guilty of high-treason.

Du Perron drew this dispute into a great length: but I shall only give a short account of it. This is not the place to enter into a deep discussion of those sentiments. I would content myself with declaring to my fellow-citizens, it was not because Henry IV. received the holy oil at Chartres, that obedience was due to him, but because the crown was indisputably his right by birth, and that he deserved it by his courage and his goodness.

We may therefore be permitted to say, that, by the same rule, every citizen should inherit the fortune of his father; and that he should not be deprived of it, or be dragged to the gallows, because he may be of the opinion of Ratram against Rathberg, or of Berenger against Scot.

It must be allowed, that all our dogmas have not been clearly explained, or universally received by the church. Jesus Christ not having told us, whence the Holy Ghost had *proceeded*, the Latin church was a great while of the same opinion with the Greek,
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that he had proceeded only from the Father; at last it was added, that he had proceeded also from the Son. I ask, if on the morning of this decision, a man who maintained the doctrine of the church in the preceding evening, would be deserving of death? The cruelty and injustice are not less in punishing those who think at this time, according to the apprehensions of the church in former times. It was not criminal in the reign of Honorius I. to believe that Jesus Christ had two wills.

It is not long since the doctrine of the immaculate conception has been established. The Dominicans do not believe it at this time. When will the Dominicans be deemed deserving of punishment in this world, and in that which is to come?

If we are to be instructed in the best method of conducting our disputes, it should certainly be by the apostles and evangelists. St. Paul and St. Peter had subjects of contest sufficient to excite a violent schism. Paul says expressly, in his epistle to the Galatians, that he would oppose Peter to his face; because he thought Peter blameable; because he and Barnabas had been guilty of dissimulation; because they had eat with the Gentiles before the arrival of James; and after his arrival, retired secretly, and separated from the Gentiles, from fear of giving offence to those who were circumcised. He adds, "I see they do not conduct themselves according to the Gospel. I said, (to Cephas) if you being a Jew, live as the Gentiles and not as the Jews do, why would you oblige the Gentiles to adopt the Jewish customs?"

This subject occasioned a violent quarrel. The question was, whether the converts to Christianity were to observe the Jewish ceremonies? St. Paul, at that time, went to the temple of Jerusalem to sacrifice. We know, that the first fifteen bishops of Jerusalem were Jews who had been circumcised, who observed the sabbath, and who abstained from forbidden

bidden meats. A Spanish or Portuguese bishop, who should submit to be circumcised, or observe the sabbath, would be burnt at an *auto-da-fe*. However, the general peace was not sacrificed to this fundamental object, either by the apostles or by the first Christians.

If the evangelists had been such persons as our modern writers, they had an extensive field in which they might have contended against each other. St. Matthew reckons twenty-eight generations from David to Jesus Christ. St. Luke reckons forty-one. And these generations are absolutely different. We observe no dissensions, however, arising among the disciples, upon these apparent contradictions; which have been so well reconciled by several fathers of the church. Charity was not wounded, and peace was preserved. What better lesson could have been given us, to tolerate each other in our disputes; and, in things which we do not understand, to conduct ourselves with humility?

St. Paul, in his epistle to some Jews at Rome, who had been converted to Christianity, employs the latter part of the third chapter in asserting the doctrine of justification by faith, and that works justified no man. St. James, on the contrary, in the second chapter of his epistle to the twelve tribes dispersed throughout the world, says repeatedly, that no man can be saved without works. These opinions have separated two large communions among us; but they occasioned no division among the apostles.

If the persecution of those who dispute our opinions were an holy action, it must be acknowledged, that the man who should cause the greatest number of hereticks to be put to death, would be the greatest saint in Paradise. What figure would a person make, who had contented himself with depriving his brethren of their property, or plunging them in dungeons, when compared with a zealot who had

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massacred

massacred hundreds on the day of St. Bartholomew? We shall see the reason.

The successor of St. Peter and his consistory cannot err. They approve, they celebrate, and sanctify the massacre at Paris; therefore, that act was most holy; therefore, of two assassins, furnished with equal piety, the one who shall rip up four and twenty Huguenot women with child, would be entitled to double the degree of glory, to that which he could claim who had only destroyed twelve in the same manner. By the same method of reasoning, the fanatics of Cevennes may believe, they are to be exalted in glory, in proportion to the number of Catholic priests, friars, and women, whom they have murdered. These are strange titles to eternal glory.

CHAP. XII.

Whether Intolerance was a Divine Principle or Law, in the Religion of the Jews? And whether the Jews always persecuted?

WE call that a *divine law*, which is founded on precepts given by God himself. The Jews were commanded to eat a lamb dressed with bitter herbs, and those who partook of it, were to eat standing, and with staffs in their hands, in commemoration of the passover. The high-priest was to be consecrated by putting blood on his right-ear, his right hand, and his right foot. They seem to us extraordinary usages; but they were not so in ancient times. It was ordained, that the he-goat *Hazazel* should bear the iniquities of the people. They were prohibited to use as food,* fish which had not scales, hogs, hares, hedgehogs, owls, griffins, ixions, &c.

Festi-

* Deuter. Chap. xiv.

Festivals and ceremonies were instituted; and all those things which seemed arbitrary in other nations, which were enjoined by positive law, and by custom, being commanded by God himself, became a religious duty to the Jews; as all those things which are commanded by Jesus Christ, the son of Mary, and the Son of God, is a religious duty to us.

We are not to enquire here, why God hath substituted a new law to that which he had given to Moses, and why he commanded Moses to observe a much greater number of things than the patriarch Abraham, and Abraham to observe more than Noah.*

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* As we mean to give some useful notes in this work, we shall here remark, that God entered into a covenant with Noah, and with all the animals. And while he permitted Noah to eat of all that had life and motion, he excepted blood; which he did not permit men to take as food. God added, "He would have vengeance on all those animals who should shed the blood of man."

We may infer from these passages, and from many others, the opinion of all antiquity, which is agreeable to what all sensible men now think, that animals are endowed with some knowledge. God did not enter into covenants with trees or with stones, which have no apprehension; but he did with animals, whom he endowed with feelings often more exquisite than ours, and with some ideas necessarily connected with those feelings. The reason that men should not be indulged in the barbarity of feeding on their blood, is, that the blood is the source of life, and consequently of sentiment. Deprive an animal of all his blood, and his organs will lose their action. It is with reason, therefore, that the Scriptures say, in a hundred places, that the soul, i. e. what we call the *sensitive soul*, is in the blood; and an opinion so natural, has been that of all people.

On that opinion is founded that commiseration which we ought to entertain for animals. In the seven precepts of the Noachides admitted by the Jews, there is one which forbids men to eat the members of a living animal. The precept is a proof, that they had been cruel enough to cut off the limbs of animals, and to eat them immediately; and that they suffered them to live, in order to take the several parts of their bodies according to their convenience. That custom continued among some barbarous nations; as we may infer from the sacrifices offered up in the isle of Chios, to Bacchus Omadios, or Bacchus who fed on raw flesh. The Deity, while he permits us to use animals as food, recommends humanity towards them. It must be confessed, that it is barbarous to

It seems that he condescends to accommodate himself to the times, and to the state of population among mankind. The gradation is therefore to be considered as the effect of paternal regard. But these depths are too profound for our weak eyes. We will confine ourselves within the bounds of our subject, and examine what kind and degree of intolerance prevailed among the Jews.

It is true, that in Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy, there are severe laws, and yet more severe chastisements, announced on the subject of worship. Many commentators have a difficulty in reconciling the accounts of Moses with the passages of Jeremiah, of Amos, and with the celebrated discourse of St. Stephen, recorded in the

make them suffer; and custom only can diminish that horror which must naturally arise in us, when we are cutting the throat of a creature which we have fed with our own hands. There have been, at all times, whole nations who have scrupled and declined this practice; that scruple remains in the peninsula of India; the Pythagorean sect in Italy and Greece always abstained from flesh; Porphyry, in his book on abstinence, reproaches a disciple for having quitted that sect, in order to indulge his brutal appetite.

It is necessary to renounce the light of nature, before we presume to advance that animals are only machines. There is a manifest contradiction in allowing, that God has endowed the brutes with organs which produce sentiment, while we maintain, that he has not given them sentiment.

We cannot have observed animals with attention, if we do not distinguish between their cries of want, of suffering, of joy, of fear, of love, of anger, and of all the affections; it would be very extraordinary they should express so well what they do not feel.

This observation might furnish abundant reflections to improved minds, on the power and goodness of God, who has given life, sentiment, ideas, and memory, to those beings whom he has organized. We know not how those organs were formed, how they are developed; how we receive life; or by what laws, sentiments, ideas, memory and will, we are attached to that life: and amidst the profound ignorance inherent in our nature, we dispute without ceasing; and we persecute, as bulls fight each other with their horns, without knowing wherefore, or how they became furnished with them.

Acts

Acts of the Apostles. Amos says,* that the Jews, during their sojourning in the desert, adored Moloch, Rempham, and Chium. Jeremiah says † expressly, that God did not require sacrifices of their fathers, when they went out of Egypt. St. Stephen, in his discourse to the Jews, ‡ expresses himself thus, “ They adore the hosts of heaven ; they offered neither sacrifices nor offerings in the desert, during forty years ; they carried with them the tabernacle of the god Moloch, and the star of their god Rempham.”

Other critics infer from the worship of so many strange gods, that those gods were tolerated by Moses ; and they quote, as proofs, these words in Deuteronomy, § “ When you are come into the land of Canaan, you will not act as you now do, when every man doth what seemeth him good.” ||

They

* Amos, chap. v. ver. 26. † Jerem. chap. vii. ver. 12.

‡ Acts, chap. vii. ver. 42. § Deut. chap. xii. ver. 28.

|| Many writers have concluded from this passage, that the chapter concerning the golden calf, who was no other than the god Apis, has been, like many other chapters, added to the books of Moses.

Aben-Ezra was the first who thought he could prove that the Pentateuch had been committed to writing in the time of the kings. Wollaston [Woolston] Collins, Tindal, Shaftesbury, Bollingbroke and many others, have asserted that the art of cutting letters on stone, brick, lead, or wood, was then the only manner of writing ; they say, that in the time of Moses, the Chaldeans and Egyptians wrote in the same manner ; that they designed in a summary manner, and by hieroglyphicks, the substance of what they wished to transmit to posterity, and not in minute and circumstantial histories : that it was not possible to write, or rather engrave, large books of considerable size in a desert, where they changed their habitation so often ; where there was no person who could furnish them with cloaths, or make them, or even repair their sandals ; and where God was obliged to uphold a miracle for forty years to preserve their garments and slippers. They say it is not probable they should have many engravers of characters, when they were destitute of more necessary arts, when they could not even make bread. And if it be observed, in answer, that the columns of the tabernacle were of brass, and

They support their opinion on this circumstance, that no religious action of the Jewish people while they were in the wilderness is ever spoken of; no passover

the chapters of massy silver; they say, that an order to that purpose was given in the wilderness, but that it was executed in more happy times.

They could not conceive, that a people in so much poverty, should have demanded a calf of massy gold, to be adored at the foot of that mountain where God spoke to Moses in thunder and lightning, which they saw, and with the sound of a celestial trumpet, which they heard. They seem surprised, that in the evening of the same day, in which Moses descended from the mount, the people should apply to his brother, in order to have this calf of massy gold. How could Aaron have cast it in one day? And how did Moses reduce it to powder? They say, it is impossible for any artist to form a statue of gold in less than three months; and that the highest improvements in chemistry will not reduce it into such powder as may be swallowed. So that the prevarication of Aaron, and the operation of Moses, must have been both miraculous.

That humanity or goodness of heart which is apt to deceive itself, prevents them from believing, that to expiate this crime, Moses should have caused three and twenty thousand men to be put to death; they cannot imagine, that any thing less than a miracle should have induced such numbers to submit to be massacred by the Levites. And they think it strange, that Aaron, the most culpable of the whole, should be recompensed for a crime which drew a severe punishment on the people; and be made high-priest, while the bleeding bodies of twenty-three thousand of his brethren were in heaps at the foot of the altar where he offered up sacrifices.

They have similar difficulties on the subject of the twenty-four thousand Israelites massacred by Moses's order, to expiate the fault of one, whom he had surprised with a Midianitish girl. We have seen, they say, so many Jewish kings, particularly Solomon, marrying strangers with impunity, that we cannot admit the alliance with a Midianitish woman to have been so great a crime. Ruth was a Moabite, though her family was originally of Bethlehem. The Scriptures always call her *Ruth the Moabite*. She journeyed, however, with the intention of captivating Boaz, by the advice of her mother; received from him six measures of barley; was married to him; and was the grand-mother of David. Rahab was not only a stranger, but a woman of ill fame; the vulgate uses no other epithet in regard to her, but that of harlot. She was married to Solomon, prince of Judah; and David was descended from that Solomon. Rahab is regarded as the type of the Christian church.

passover celebrated; no pentecost; no mention of their having observed the feast of tabernacles; no method

church. That was the opinion of many of the fathers, and especially of Origen, in his seventh homily on Joshua.

Bathsheba, wife of Uriah, by whom David had Solomon, was an Hittite. And if we look further back, we shall find, the patriarch Judah married to a woman of Canaan; his sons cohabited with Thamar, who was descended from Aaron; and the woman with whom Judah ignorantly committed incest, was not of the race of Israel.

Thus our Lord Jesus Christ deigned to take on him the form of humanity, in a family descended from five aliens, in order to shew, that all nations were to partake of the inheritance which he procured. We have already observed, that the Rabin Aben-Ezra was the first who undertook to prove, the Pentateuch was written after the death of Moses: and he quotes several passages in those books as his authorities; among which are the following; "The Canaanites then dwelt in the land. The mountain of Moria, called the mountain of God. The bed of Og, king of Bashan, is still to be seen in Rabath. And the country of Bashan is called the villages of Jaiar unto this day. There was never a prophet in Israel like unto Moses. These are the kings who reigned in Edom, before any king reigned in Israel." He pretends that these passages, where events are mentioned, which happened long after the time of Moses, could not have been written by Moses himself. The answer to these objections is, that the passages were added afterwards as notes by the transcribers.

Newton, whose name on every occasion should be mentioned with respect, but who was liable to err as a man, in the introduction to his Commentaries on Daniel and St. John, ascribes the five books of Moses, those of Joshua and Judges, to sacred writers who lived much later than Moses; and he founds his opinion on the 36th chapter of Genesis; the 17th, 18th, 19th, and 21st chapters of Judges; the 8th chapter of Samuel; the 2d of Chronicles, and the 4th of Ruth. Indeed, if we consider that kings are mentioned in the 36th chapter of the book Genesis, and in the book of Judges; and that David is spoken of in the book of Ruth, we must think it probable, that those books were written in the times of the kings. This is the opinion of several divines, the principal of whom is Le Clerc. There are, however, only a few of those who adopt this opinion, who have attempted these profound enquiries. A curiosity of this kind, is not in the rank of those duties which are obligatory on man. When after a short life the learned and the ignorant, the prince and the shepherd, shall appear together before the great arbiter of their eternal fate; we shall then all wish to have been just, humane, compassionate,

method of public supplications established. Nay circumcision, that seal of the covenant of God with Abraham, was neglected.

They

and generous, and no man will value himself on having known the precise year in which the Pentateuch was written, or on being able to distinguish the original text from the notes added and used by the scribes. God will not enquire, whether we took part with the Masoretes against the Talmud; or whether we have never mistaken a *capb* for a *beth*, a *yod* for a *vau*, or a *daleb* for a *resh*. He will certainly judge us by our actions, and not by our knowledge of Hebrew. We will therefore adhere firmly to the decision of the church, according to the reasonable obligations which bind the faithful.

Let us conclude this note with an important passage from Leviticus, a book written since the time in which the golden calf was adored. The Jews are commanded no longer to adore *hairy animals*, such as *be-goats*, *with whom they had committed infamous abominations*. (Levit. Chap. xvii.) We do not know, whether this strange worship came from Egypt, the country of superstition and forcery; but it is believed, that the custom among our pretended forcerers, of going to observe the sabbath, of adoring a goat, and of committing astonishing indecencies with it, the very idea of which is horrible, came from the ancient Jews; as, in fact, they taught a great part of Europe the art of forcery. What a people! An infamy so uncommon, seemed to deserve a punishment equal to that which the golden calf brought on them; the legislator, however, contented himself with simply prohibiting those practices. We have recorded this fact here, only to point out the character of the Jewish nation; bestiality must have been common among them, since they are the only people to whom it has been necessary to prohibit that crime by laws; a crime which was not even suspected by any other legislator.

We may believe, that by the fatigues and hardships which the Jews endured in the deserts of Paran, Horeb, and Kadesh-Barnea, more women were lost than men. The Jews must have been in want of women; for when they conquered any town or village, to the right or left of the lake Asphaltés, they put all to death, except those girls who were marriageable.

The Arabs, who now inhabit a part of these deserts, always stipulate in the treaties they make with the caravans, that they should furnish them with marriageable girls. It is very probable, that young men in these dreary deserts, might have been so far depraved, as to have commerce with goats; as it is said of the shepherds of Calabria.

It is not known, however, that these connections produced monsters, and whether there be any foundation for the ancient fables

They avail themselves also of the history of Joshua. That conqueror said to the Jews,* "The alternative is given you, chuse as you please; either to worship the gods whom you have served in the country of the Amorites, or those whom you have acknowledged in Mesopotamia. The people answered, Not so; we will serve *Adonai* [the Lord.] Joshua proceeded: You have chosen; take away from you the strange gods." It is certain, therefore, that they had other gods besides *Adonai*, [the Lord] when under the direction of Moses.

It would not be of great use to refute those critics who think that the Pentateuch was not written by Moses; every thing has been said long since on that subject; and though we even admit, that some parts of the works of Moses were written in the times of the judges, kings, or the high-priests, they will not have the less claim to inspiration or divinity.

It seems to me sufficient, that the Holy Scriptures prove, notwithstanding the extraordinary punishment of the Jews for worshipping the god Apis, they enjoyed an entire liberty; perhaps, that Moses by massacring twenty-three thousand people, for adoring a calf set up by his brother, found that nothing was to be gained by rigour, and was obliged to connive at their passion for strange gods.

He seems himself soon after to have transgressed the law which he had given. He prohibited all images, and yet set up the brazen serpent. We find a similar exception to the law in the temple of Solomon. That prince had twelve brazen bulls, as supporters to the grand basen of the temple; cherubims in the ark; which had the heads of an eagle, and of a calf. And it is probable, that the Roman

bles of satyrs, fauns, centaurs, and minotaurs. History says there is; natural philosophy has not yet thrown much light on this disagreeable article.

* Chap. xxiv, ver. 15 & seq.

fol-

soldiers finding the head of a calf badly formed in the temple, was the reason it was so long believed, that the Jews worshipped an afs.

The worship of strange gods is prohibited in vain. Solomon is an idolater without molestation. Jeroboam, to whom God gave ten parts of the kingdom, set up two calves of gold; and yet reigned two and twenty years, uniting in his person the dignities of king and high-priest. The petty kingdom of Judah, under Rehoboam, set up altars and statues to strange gods. The holy king Aza did not demolish the *high-places*.* Uriah, the high-priest, placed in the temple, instead of the altar of burnt-offerings, one which had been ordered by the king of Syria. In a word, we find no restraint on religion. I acknowledge, that the Jews generally exterminated or assassinated each other; but it was always from motives of interest, and not of faith.

It is true,† among the prophets, we find some who interest heaven in their vengeance. Elias caused fire to descend from heaven to consume the priests of Baal. Elijah sent bears to devour two and forty children, for having called him *Bald-head*.‡ But these miracles occur but seldom; and they are acts which it would be rather inhuman to imitate.

It is further objected to us, that the Jewish nation was ignorant and barbarous. It is said, that in the war against the Midianites,§ Moses commanded that all male children, and all those women who were mothers, should be slain, and that the spoil should be divided.

* Fourth book of Kings, chap. xvi.

† Book III. chap. xviii. ver. 38 and 40. Book IV. chap. ii. ver. 24.

‡ Numbers, chap. xxxi.

§ Midian was not comprized in the land of promise. It is a little canton of Idumea, in Arabia Petrea, and extending from the torrent of Arron, northward, to the torrent of Zared, in the midst of the rocks on the eastern coast of the lake Asphaltés. This country is inhabited by a small herd of Arabs, and may be about eight leagues in length, and something less in breadth.

The conquerors found in the camp, six hundred and seventy-five thousand sheep, seventy-two thousand oxen, sixty-one thousand asses, and thirty-two thousand young girls. These they made a division of, and killed all who did not come under their description of booty. Several commentators pretend, that thirty-two of the young maidens were sacrificed to the Lord: *cesserunt in partem Domini triginta due animæ*; "thirty-two souls were given up, as appertaining to the Lord."

It is a fact, that the Jews offered up human sacrifices to the Divinity; witness the sacrifice of the daughter of Jephtha;* witness King Agag,† hewn in pieces

* It is certain by the text that Jephtha sacrificed his daughter. Calmet, in his dissertation on the vow of Jephtha, says, "God did not approve of these vows; but when made, he would have them fulfilled, were it only to punish those who made them, or to repress the levity with which they might be made; if men were not apprehensive of being obliged to perform them." St. Augustine, and almost all the fathers, condemn the action of Jephtha. It is true, the Scripture saith, that "he was filled with the spirit of God." And St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, (chap. xi.) gives a panegyric on Jephtha; whom he ranks with Samuel and David. St. Jerom, in his epistle to Julian, says, "Jephtha sacrificed his daughter to the Lord; it is on that account the apostle mentions him among the saints." Here are opposite judgments, where we are not permitted to decide, and where we should be afraid to have even an opinion.

† We may consider the death of Agag as a real sacrifice. Saul had made this prince of the Amalekites prisoner of war, and had stipulated his ransom. But the priest Samuel had commanded him to spare nothing: he said expressly, "Destroy all, both man and woman, infant and suckling—and Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the Lord in Gilgal."

Calmet saith, that "the zeal with which the prophet was animated, put a sword into his hand on that occasion, to avenge the glory of God, and to confound Saul."

In this fatal adventure, there was a vow, a priest, a victim; it was therefore a sacrifice.

All nations, with whose history we are acquainted, except the Chinese, have offered up human sacrifices to the Deity. Plutarch says, that the Romans had this custom, before the demolition of the republic.

We

pieces by the prophet Samuel. And Ezekiel, to encourage them, promises they shall feed on human flesh; "You shall eat of the horse, and of the rider, and you shall drink of the blood of princes." Several commentators apply two verses of this prophecy to the Jews, and the rest to carnivorous animals. We do not find in all the history of this people any act of generosity, magnanimity, or beneficence; and yet some rays of universal toleration escape through the clouds of a long and dreadful barbarism.

We see in the Commentaries of Cæsar, that the Germans were going to sacrifice the hostages he had given them, which he prevented only by his victory.

I have observed elsewhere, that this violation of the law of nations in the treatment of Cæsar's hostages, and the custom of offering up human victims, rendered compleatly horrible, by being done by the hands of women, seems rather to contradict the panegyric of Tacitus on the Germans; in his treatise, *De Moribus Germanorum*. In this treatise, Tacitus seems to have intended to satyrize the Romans, rather than to praise the Germans, of whom he had no knowledge.

By the way, we may here observe, that Tacitus loved satire more than truth. He wished to render every thing, even the most indifferent actions, odious; and his malignity pleases us almost as much as his stile, because we are fond of scandal and wit.

But to return to human victims. Our ancestors had this custom as well as the Germans; it is the lowest degree of depravity to which human nature can sink, and one of the effects of the weakness of our understandings. We say, It is our duty to offer up to God whatever is most precious and pleasing to us. We have nothing more precious than our children; it is our duty therefore to chuse the youngest and most beautiful of them to sacrifice to the Deity.

Philo says, that it was a custom in Canaan to sacrifice children, before God, to try the faith of Abraham, commanded him to offer up to him his only son Isaac.

Sanctoniathon, quoted by Eusebius, says, that the Phenicians in great dangers sacrificed the most favored and dear of their children, and that Ilus offered up his son Jehud, at or near the time that God made trial of the faith of Abraham. It is difficult to penetrate the obscurity of this part of antiquity: but it is too true, that these horrible sacrifices were almost every where in use; men discontinued them as they gradually civilized. Politeness is the guide and instructor of humanity.

Jeph-

Jephtha, who was inspired by God, and who sacrificed his daughter to him, says to the Amorites, "Will not ye possess that which Chemosh your god giveth you to possess? So, whomsoever the Lord our God shall drive from before us, them will we possess."* This declaration is explicit, and might lead them very far; it is, however, an evident proof, that God tolerated the worship of Chemosh. For the Holy Scripture doth not say, "You think you have a right to the land, which is given you by the god Chemosh;" but saith positively, "You have a right," *tibi jure debentur*; that is the true sense of the Hebrew words *Otho thirashch*.

The story of Micah and the Levite, related in the seventeenth and eighteenth chapters of the book of Judges, is a proof still more incontestible of the general toleration and liberty which was then admitted among the Jews. The opulent wife of Ephraim and mother of Micah, having lost eleven hundred pieces of silver, and her son having made up the loss, she made images of the silver, and devoted them to the Lord; she built a small chapel, where a Levite officiated, being allowed yearly ten pieces of silver, a tunic, a mantle, and his provisions. And Micah said exultingly, "Now I know that the Lord will do me good, seeing that I have a priest of the race of Levi."

In this time, six hundred men of the tribe of Dan, who were endeavouring to get possession and to fix themselves in some village, but not having a Levite, and imagining that on this account God would not favour their enterprise, came to the house of Micah, and took with them his ephod, his idols, his Levite, in spite of the remonstrances of the priest, and in spite of the cries of Micah and his mother. Emboldened by success, they attacked a village called Laish, and destroyed all by fire and sword, according

* Judges, chap. xi. ver. 24.

to custom. They gave the name of Dan to Laish, in remembrance of their victory; they set up Micah's graven image on an altar; and what is more remarkable, Jonathan, the grandson of Moses, was high-priest of this temple, in which were adored both the God of Israel and the idol of Micah.

During twenty years after the death of Gideon, the Hebrews adored Baal-Perith, and renounced the worship of Adonai, or the Lord, without any punishment adjudged, either by a chief, a judge, or a priest. The crime was great, I confess; but if this idolatry was tolerated, we may suppose they thought it much more a duty to allow of difference in the true worship.

Some persons alledge, in support of intolerance, that the Lord himself, having permitted his ark to be taken by the Philistines in battle, punished them only by an inward distemper resembling the hæmorrhoids, by throwing down the statue of Dagon, and by sending a multitude of rats into their fields. But when the Philistines, to appease his anger, had sent back the ark drawn by two cows, who gave milk to their calves, and offered up to God five golden rats and five golden hemorrhoids, he caused seventy of the elders and fifty thousand of the people of Israel to be put to death, for having looked on the ark. The answer is, that the chastisement of the Lord was not on account of belief, of difference in worship, or of idolatry.

If God had been inclined to punish idolatry, he would have destroyed all the Philistines who presumed to seize on his ark, and adored Dagon. But we find him destroying fifty thousand and seventy of his own people, only because they looked at the ark, which they ought not to have done. So much did the laws, the manners of the time, and the Jewish œconomy differ from every thing of which we have any knowledge; and so much above ours, are the unsearchable ways of God! The judicious Calmet saith,

“ The rigour exercised on such a multitude of men,
 “ will appear excessive to those only who have no
 “ comprehension to what degree God would be
 “ feared and respected by his people; and who
 “ judge of the views and designs of God, by fol-
 “ lowing the light of their own reason.”

The Lord then did not punish strange worship, but the profanation of his own; an indiscreet curiosity, disobedience, and perhaps a seditious spirit. We must be sensible, that such chastisements belong only to the God of the Jewish theocracy. We cannot too often say, that those times and those manners have no relation to ours.

Some ages afterwards, when the idolatrous Naaman asked Elijah, if he might be permitted to follow his king to the temple of Rimmon, and *there to worship with him*;* the same Elijah who had caused the children to be devoured by bears, answered him, “ Go in peace.”

Nay, further; the Lord commanded Jeremiah to lay cords, collars, and yokes on his neck, and send them to the petty princes or chiefs of Moab, of Ammon, of Edom, of Tyre, and of Sidon.† And Jeremiah ordered

* Kings, book IV. chap. xx. ver. 25.

† Those who are but little acquainted with the usages of antiquity, and who draw conclusions from what they see around them, may be astonished at these singularities. But it is necessary on these subjects to recollect, that in Egypt, and in a great part of Asia, things were expressed at this time by figures, hieroglyphicks, signs and types.

The prophets, who were called *seers* among the Egyptians and Jews, not only expressed themselves in allegories, but represented by signs the events which they foretold. In this manner Isaiah, who was the chief of the four great prophets among the Jews, took a scroll and wrote, *Sbas * bas, hasten to the spoil*. He then approached the prophetess, and she conceived, and brought forth a son, whom he called *Maber-Salas*,* *Has-bas*. (Isaiah, chap. viii. ver. 1, 4.) This is to be understood, as a type of the evils which the Egyptians and Assyrians were to bring on the Jews.

* * Mr. Voltaire's Hebrew has been exactly copied by the translator. This is not the only place where the author quotes from memory.

ordered the messenger to say to them from the Lord, "I have given all your lands to Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, my servant." Here an idolatrous king is declared to be the servant and favorite of the Lord.

The

The prophet saith, "Before the child shall be of age to eat butter and honey, to refuse the evil and chuse the good, the land which they abhorred shall be delivered of both her kings, and the Lord will hiss to the bees of Egypt, and to the bees of Assyria, and the Lord will shave with a razor that is hired, the beard, and the hair of the feet of the king of Assyria." Isaiah, chap. vii. ver. 15, 18.

This prophecy of the bees, and of the beard and hair of the feet which were to be shaven, can be understood only by those who know it was the custom to call together swarms of bees by the sound of a flagelet, or some other rustic instrument; that the greatest affront which could be offered to a man was to cut off his beard; that the hair on the privities was called the hair of the feet, and that it was never shaven but in the leprosy, or in some other unclean disorder. All these figures, so strange and foreign to our style, signify nothing more, than that the Lord, in some years, would deliver his people from oppression.

The same Isaiah (chap. xx.) walks naked, to shew that the king of Assyria would lead away a great number of captives from Egypt and Ethiopia, who should not have wherewith to cover their nakedness.

Ezekiel (chap. iii.) eats the roll of parchment which is given him: afterwards he covers his bread with excrements, and continues to lie on his left side three hundred and ninety days, and forty days on his right side, to signify the Jews should want bread, and the number of years they were to remain in captivity. He loads himself with chains, to represent those which the people were to wear; he cuts off his hair and his beard, and divides them into three parts; the first to represent those who were to perish in the city; the second, those to be slain without the walls; and the third, those who were to be led away to Babylon.

The prophet Hosea (chap. iii.) cohabits with an adulteress, whom he purchases for fifteen pieces of silver, and an omar and a half of barley. "Thou shalt abide for me many days; thou shalt not play the harlot; and thou shalt not be for another man; for so shall the children of Israel abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without an image, and without an ephod." In a word, the seers or prophets hardly ever foretel any thing, without representing the thing foretold by a sign.

Jeremiah

The same Jeremiah, whom the petty prince Zedekiah threw into a dungeon, and afterwards pardoned, advises Zedekiah, in the name of the Lord, to give himself up to the king of Babylon. "If thou wilt go forth unto the king of Babylon's officers, thy soul shall live." God, therefore, supports the interest of an idolatrous king; delivers up to him his holy ark, the sight of which had cost the lives of fifty thousand and seventy Jews; he gives him possession of the holy of holies, and the rest of the temple, the building of which had cost a hundred and eight thousand talents of gold, one million se-

Jeremiah, therefore, only conformed to a custom, in binding himself with cords, and laying collars and yokes on his neck, to signify the future slavery of those to whom he sent them. And if we consider these things, the times we refer to will appear like those of an ancient world, which differs in every thing from the modern: civil life, the laws, the manner of making war, and the ceremonies of religion, are all absolutely different. We have only to open Homer, and the first book of Herodotus, to be convinced, that we have no resemblance to the people of early antiquity; and that we ought to proceed with diffidence, when we compare their manners with ours. Even Nature was not what she is at this time. Magicians had a power over her, which is no more: they enchanted serpents, and called up the dead, &c. God sent dreams, and men explained them. The gift of prophecy was common. They saw several metamorphoses, as Nebuchadnezzar changed into an ox; Lot's wife into a statue of salt; and five cities into a bituminous lake.

There were also species of men, which are no more. The race of giants, Rephaim, Ernim, Nephilim, Enacim, have disappeared. St. Augustin, in his fifth book *De civitate Dei*, saith, he had seen the tooth of an ancient giant, as large as a hundred of our grinders. Ezekiel speaks of [*gamadim*] pigmies who fought at the siege of Tyre, and who were only a cubit in height. In almost all these things, sacred and profane writers are agreed. Diseases, and their remedies, were very different from the present. Demoniacs were cured by means of a root, called *barad*, set in a ring, which was put or held under their noses. In short, the ancient world was so different from the modern, that we cannot deduce from it any rules for our conduct. And, if in remote antiquity, men persecuted and oppressed each other, on the subject of religion, we, who are under the law of grace, ought not to imitate such cruelty.

venteen thousand talents of silver, and the ten thousand drachmas of gold, which had been left by David and his officers, towards building the house of the Lord. All these sums, exclusive of those employed by Solomon, amounts nearly to the sum of nineteen millions, and sixty-two millions of the present currency. Never was idolatry so well rewarded. I am sensible, that this account is exaggerated; and that, in all probability, there may be some error of a copyist; but reduce the sum to half, to a fourth, or to an eighth of that which has been stated, and it will still astonish you. Our surprise is much less at the riches, which Herodotus says he saw in the temple of Ephesus. But treasures are nothing in the sight of the Lord; and the appellation of *servant* conferred by God on Nebuchadnezzar,* was the true inestimable treasure.

God† was not less favourable to Kyr, or Koresh, or Kosraces, whom we call Cyrus. He calls him *his Christ, his anointed*, though he was not anointed according to the common signification of that word, and professed the religion of Zoroaster; he calls him *his shepherd*, while the world deemed him an usurper: there is not, in all the holy Scripture, so great a proof predilection.

Malachi says, that, “from ‡ the rising of the sun “ even unto the going down of the same, the name “ of God shall be great among the Gentiles; and in “ every place, a pure offering shall be made unto “ his name.” God takes care of the idolatrous Ninevites, as he does of the Jews. Melchisedec, who was not a Jew, was high-priest to the Lord. Balaam, an idolater, was a prophet. We are thus informed by the Scriptures, that God tolerated the opinions of all nations, but had a fatherly care of them; and yet we presume to be uncharitable!

* Jer. chap. xxvii. ver. 6.

† II. chap. xlv. xlv.

‡ Malachi, chap. i. ver. 1.

C H A P. XIII.

Extreme Tolerance of the Jews.

WHILE they were governed by Moses, by judges, by kings, perpetual instances of toleration occurred. Besides, Moses often says, "that * God will visit the " sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the " third and fourth generation." A menace of this kind was necessary to a people, to whom God had not revealed the immortality of the soul, and the rewards and punishments of a future life. These truths were not announced to them in the decalogue, or in any law of Leviticus or Deuteronomy. They were the dogmas of the Persians, Babylonians, Egyptians, Greeks, and Crétans, but did not enter into the religious constitution of the Jews. Moses does not say, "Honour thy father and thy mother, " if thou art desirous of going to heaven;" but "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days " may be long in the land."† He threatens them only with bodily evils, such as the scab, the itch, malignant ulcers in the knees and legs; with the infidelity of their wives; that instead of obtaining usurious interest for money, they shall be obliged to pay it; that they shall perish of famine, or be obliged to feed on their own offspring; but he does not tell them any where, that their immortal souls will taste of pain or pleasure after death. God, who conducted his people himself, punished or recompensed immediately on their performing good or bad actions. All was temporal; and it is the circumstance by which the learned bishop Warburton demonstrates the Di-

* Exod. chap. xx. ver. 5. † Deut. chap. xxviii.

vine Legation of Moses :† because, says he, God being their king, and executing justice immediately on their obeying or transgressing, thought it unnecessary to reveal a doctrine which he reserved for times when he should no longer govern his people. Those who, through ignorance, pretend that Moses taught the immortality of the soul, deprive the New Testament of one of its principal advantages over the Old. It

† There is only one passage in the law of Moses, by which we may conclude, that he was instructed in the doctrine which prevailed among the Egyptians, “that the soul doth not perish with the body.” This passage is in the eighteenth chapter of Deuteronomy, and is of great importance. “You are not to consult those who use divination, who prophecy by observing the clouds, who charm serpents, who consult the spirit of Python, who are *seers* or *wizards*, who interrogate the dead, and require them to reveal the truth.” It appears from this passage, that the pretended necromancy which invoked the souls of the dead, supposed them to continue in existence. It is also possible, that the magicians, of whom Moses speaks, not being dextrous deceivers, might want clear ideas of the effects which they pretended to produce. They made people believe, that they obliged the dead to speak, and that they restored their bodies, by magic, to the state they had been in while living: without once adverting, whether the doctrine of the immortality of the soul might be inferred from their ridiculous operations. Magicians have never been philosophers; they have always been stupid jugglers, who played tricks to weak people.

We must observe, that it is very strange, the word *python* should be found in Deuteronomy, so long before that Greek word could have been known to the Jews; besides, the word *python* is not in the Hebrew text, of which we have not any accurate translation.

That language has some difficulties which are insurmountable. It is a medley of the Phenician, Egyptian, Syriac, and Arabic; and that ancient medley is at this time exceedingly altered. The Hebrew verbs never had more than two moods, the present and the future; the other moods were to be guessed at by the sense. The different vowels were often expressed by the same characters; or rather, the vowels were not expressed; and those who invented points only increased the difficulties of the language. Every adverb has twenty different significations. The same word is used in opposite senses. We may add to these embarrassments, the barrenness and poverty of the language. The Jews, unacquainted with the arts, could not express any circumstances relating to them. In a word, the Hebrew is to the Greek, what the language of a peasant is to that of an academician.

is certain, the law of Moses denounced only temporal punishments extending to the fourth generation; and yet, notwithstanding the express declaration of this law, Ezekiel taught the contrary to the Jews. He tells them, "the son shall not bear the iniquities of the father."* And he goes so far as to make God to say, "† he had given them statutes that were not good."‡

The book of Ezekiel was nevertheless admitted among the canonical or inspired writers. It is true, the synagogue did not permit the book to be read by any one, before he arrived at the age of thirty, as St. Jerome informs us. The reason was, lest an improper use should be made by their youth of the very plain description of the lewdness of Aholah and Aholibah, in the sixteenth and twenty third chapters of it.

When the immortality of the soul beame an established doctrine, which was probably during the cap-

* Ezek. chap. xviii. ver. 20.

† Chap. xx. ver. 25.

‡ The opinion of Ezekiel prevailed at last in the synagogue. But there were some among the Jews, who, as they believed the doctrine of eternal punishments, believed likewise, that God punished on the children the iniquities of the fathers. At this time, the punishment is carried beyond the fiftieth generation; and the children, besides, are to fear eternal punishments. It may be asked, with what justice are those Jews, who were not accomplices in the death of Christ; those who were at Jerusalem, but took no part in it; and those who were dispersed throughout the world, punished in the temporal misfortunes of their children, who are as innocent as their parents? This temporal punishment, or rather the necessity of living in a different manner from other people, and of carrying on trade without having a certain settlement or country, may not be considered as chastisements, when compared with the eternal miseries which their incredulity will draw on them, and which is to be avoided only by a sincere conversion.

§ Those who would find in the Pentateuch, the doctrine of heaven and hell, according to our conceptions of them, will be deceived. Their error is owing to a vain dispute on words; the vulgate having translated the Hebrew word *sheol*, which signifies *hole* or *pit*, by the word *infernum*; and this word being rendered by

captivity of Babylon, the sect of the Sadducees persisted in believing there were no rewards or punish-

ments. The French *enfer*, has given pretence to establish a belief, that the Hebrews had a notion of the *hades*, and *tartarus* of the Greeks; which other nations had known before them, under other names.

It is said in the sixteenth chapter of Numbers, that the earth opened under the tents of Corah, Dathan, and Abiram; that it swallowed them, their tents and their possessions; that they were precipitated alive into the burying-place or vault. There is certainly nothing in this passage concerning the three Hebrews, nor of the torments of hell, nor of eternal punishment.

It is strange, that under the word *hell* in the *Dictionnaire Encyclopedique*, it should be said, that the ancient Hebrews believed in the reality of it. If that were the case, there would be an irreconcilable contradiction in the Pentateuch. How should it have happened, that Moses spoke of the miseries of a future state, in one detached passage only, and said nothing of it in his laws. The thirty second chapter of Deuteronomy is cited on this occasion, but in a mutilated state; the whole passage is as follows. "They
 " have moved me to jealousy, with that which is not God; they
 " have provoked me to anger with their vanities; and I will
 " move them to jealousy with those that are not a people; I will
 " provoke them to anger with a foolish nation. For a fire is
 " kindled in my anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell; and
 " shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the
 " foundations of the mountains. I will heap mischiefs upon
 " them; I will spend mine arrows upon them: they shall be
 " burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with
 " bitter destruction. I will also send the teeth of beasts upon
 " them, with the poison of serpents of the dust."

Have these expressions any reference to the idea of eternal punishments, such as we entertain? These words seem rather to have been inserted, to prove evidently, that our hell was unknown to the ancient Jews.

The author of this article, quotes likewise a passage from the twenty-fourth chapter of Job. "The eye of the adulterer
 " waiteth for the twilight, saying, no eye shall see me, and dis-
 " guiseth his face. In the dark, they dig through houses, which
 " they had marked for themselves in the day-time. They know
 " not the light, for the morning is to them as the shadow of death;
 " if one know them, they are in the terrors of the shadow of
 " death. He is swift as the waters; their portion is cursed in
 " the earth; he beholdeth not the way of the vineyards. Drowth
 " and heat consume the snow-waters, so doth the grave those who
 " have sinned;" or, "the tomb dissipates those who have sinned;"

or,

ments after death; and that the faculties of perceiving and thinking, perished in the same manner with

or, according to the Septuagint, "their sin has been held in remembrance."

I quote these passages literally and entire; it would be impossible otherwise to form a true idea of them.

I beg to know, whether there be the least word here, from which we can conclude, that Moses taught the Jews the clear and simple doctrine of rewards and punishments after death?

The book of Job has no relation to the laws of Moses. Besides, it is very probable, that Job was not a Jew; this is the opinion of St. Jerome in his Hebrew questions on Genesis. The word Satan, which we find in Job, was not known to the Jews, and is not to be found in the Pentateuch. The Jews learnt it in Chaldea, as well as the names of Gabriel and Raphael, which they were unacquainted with before their captivity in Babylon.

They quote also this passage out of the last chapter of Isaiah: "And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh?"

It is very certain, that if these bodies were thrown into the common receptacles of filth: if they were exposed to the view of passengers even to abhorring; if they were devoured by worms; they are not circumstances which will prove, that Moses instructed the Jews in the doctrine of the immortality of the soul; and the words, "the fire shall not be quenched," cannot signify, that the bodies exposed to the view of the people, shall suffer eternal torments.

How can any one quote a passage of Isaiah, to prove that the Jews had received the doctrine of the immortality of the soul in the time of Moses? Isaiah prophesied in the year of the world three thousand three hundred and eighty, according to the Hebrew computation. Moses lived about the year two thousand five hundred: there were therefore eight centuries between the one and the other. It is an insult on common sense; or it must be pure pleasantry, thus to abuse the licence of quoting; and pretend to prove that an author is of a certain opinion, by a passage of a writer who came eight hundred years after him, and who has not mentioned that opinion. It cannot be doubted, that the immortality of the soul, and the rewards and punishments of another life, are repeatedly declared and pointed out in the New Testament; and it is certain, that these doctrines are not to be found in any part of the Pentateuch. This the great Arnauld says, in a strong and clear manner, in his Apology.

with our active force, the power of walking and of digesting. They denied the existence of angels. They

The Jews, though they afterwards believed the immortality of the soul, were not informed of its spirituality; they thought, like almost all other nations, that the soul was a thin, aerial, light substance, retaining some appearance of the body it had animated. Hence the notion of *shades and manes of the dead*. Many of the fathers of the church were of that opinion. Tertullian, in the twenty-second chapter of his book *De Anima*, expresses himself thus, *Definimus animam Dei statu natam, immortalem, corporealem, effigia, tam substantia simplicem*. "We define the soul, produced by the breath of God, to be immortal, corporeal, having a form, and being of a pure and simple substance."

St. Ireneus (Book II. chap. xxxiv.) says, *Incorporales sunt anime quantum ad comparationem mortalium corporum*; "Souls are incorporeal, when compared with mortal bodies." He adds, "Jesus Christ taught that souls preserved the images of bodies, *Caracterem corporum in quo adoptantur, &c.*" We do not know, that Jesus Christ ever taught this doctrine, and it is difficult to guess at the meaning of St. Ireneus.

St. Hilary is more express and positive in his commentary on St. Matthew. He plainly assigns a corporeal substance to the soul: *corpoream naturæ suæ substantiam sortimur*.

St. Ambrose, on Abraham, book II. chap. viii. is of opinion, that nothing is free from matter, unless it be the substance of the Holy Trinity.

We might say of these respectable men, that they had but an indifferent philosophy: but we are to believe that their divinity was very sound, as notwithstanding they were unacquainted with the incomprehensible nature of the soul, they assured it of immortality, and wished to make it Christian.

We know that the soul is spiritual; but what spirit is, we have not the least knowledge. We are but imperfectly acquainted with matter, and it is impossible we should have a distinct idea of what is not matter. Imperfectly instructed in what affects our senses, we cannot of ourselves know any thing of what is above them. We transport some words of our ordinary language into the depths of metaphysics and divinity, in order to gain some slight idea of things which we can never conceive or express. We endeavour to prop ourselves with those words, and to support our feeble understandings in those unknown regions.

Thus we use the word *spirit*, which may be explained *breath*, or *wind*, to express something which is not matter. And this word *breath*, *wind*, *spirit*, necessarily giving us the idea of a thin and light substance, we refine on this, in order to conceive of pure spirituality; but we shall never obtain a distinct idea on this subject;

They differed much more from the other Jews, than the Protestants from the Catholics. They nevertheless remained in communion with their brethren; and we even find some of their sect advanced to the dignity of high priests.

The Pharisees held the doctrine of predestination,* and that of the Metempsychosis.† The Essenians

subject; we do not even know what we say, when we pronounce the word substance; the literal meaning of it is, something beneath; by that we know it is incomprehensible: for what is this something beneath? The knowledge of the secrets of God is not allotted to this life. Plunged as we are here in profound darkness, we fight one against the other, and strike at random in the obscurity of this night, without knowing precisely what we are contending for.

If these things were reflected upon with attention, every reasonable man would conclude, that we should tolerate the opinion of others, and merit the same from them.

These remarks are not foreign to the question before us, which is, whether men should tolerate each other? For if they shew that men of different opinions have been mistaken in all times, they prove, that in all times they should have treated each other with indulgence.

* The doctrine of predestination is ancient, and has prevailed universally. It is to be found in Homer. Jupiter would have saved the life of his son Sarpedon, but Fate had condemned him, and Jupiter was obliged to submit. Fate, with the philosophers, was either the necessary chain of causes and effects, necessarily produced by nature; or it was the same chain or concatenation ordained by Providence, which is most reasonable. The whole system of fatality is contained in this line of Annæus Seneca.

Ducunt volentem fata, nolentem trahunt.

It has been always admitted, that God governed the universe by eternal, universal, and immutable laws. That truth was the origin of all the unintelligible disputes concerning liberty, because the word had not been defined until the great Locke arose; he has proved, that liberty consists in the power of acting. God gives this power; and man acting freely according to the eternal decrees of God, is one of the wheels in the great machine of the world. What horrible absurdity to have imprisoned and banished, on account of this dispute, a Pomponne d'Andilly, an Arnould, a Sacy, a Nicole, and so many others who have been the luminaries of France!

† The theological romance of Metempsychosis came from India, whence we have received many more fables than is generally apprehended.

nians thought that the souls of the just went into the fortunate islands,* and those of the wicked into a kind of Tartarus. They offered up no sacrifices, and assembled in a separate synagogue. In a word, if we accurately examine the Jewish constitution, we shall be astonished to find, the most liberal toleration amidst the horrors of barbarism. This is a contradiction it is true. Almost all nations have been governed by contradictions. Happy are those whose manners are gentle, though their laws may be bloody!

CHAP. XIV.

Whether Intolerance was taught by Jesus Christ.

LET us now examine, whether Jesus Christ hath established sanguinary laws? Whether he has commanded us to persecute? Whether he caused the dungeons

prehended. This dogma is explained by that admirable poet Ovid, in the fifteenth book of the *Metamorphoses*. It has been received in almost every part of the world, and has been always opposed; but we do not find that any priest of antiquity ever procured a *lettre de cachet* to send a disciple of Pythagoras to prison.

* Neither the ancient Jews, nor the Egyptians, nor the Greeks their cotemporaries, believed that the soul of man went to heaven after death. The Jews thought that the sun and moon were some leagues above us in the same sphere, and that the firmament was a thick and solid vault, which supported the weight of the waters, which sometimes escaped through its crevices. The palace of the gods, according to the ancient Greeks, was on mount Olympus. In Homer's time, the abode of heroes after death was in an island beyond the ocean. The Essenians also were of this opinion.

After Homer's time, planets were assigned to the gods; but men had no better reason for placing a god in the moon, than the inhabitants of the moon to place a god in our planet the earth. Juno and Iris had no other palace but the clouds, and had nothing

dungeons of the inquisition to be built; or appointed the butchers of an *auto da fê*?

If I am not mistaken, there are but few passages in the Gospels, from which a persecuting spirit can infer that intolerance and constraint are lawful; one is the parable, in which the kingdom of heaven is compared to a king, who invites guests to the marriage of his son. That monarch ordered his servants to tell them, "My oxen and my fatlings are killed; all things are ready; come unto the marriage." Some of those who were invited, making light of the invitation, went to their farms, others to their merchandise, and others insulted the king's servants, and slew them. The king ordered his army to march out against those murderers, and destroyed their city. He then sent into the highways to invite to the marriage all that could be found. One of them having sat down at table, without having the wedding garment, is bound hand and foot, and cast into outer-darkness.

It is evident, that this allegory refers only to the kingdom of heaven; no man assuredly on that account should assume a right of binding a man hand and foot, and throwing him into a dungeon, who had come to sup with him without a dress proper for the occasion; and I do not recollect in history, any prince who has ordered a courtier to be hanged for any such reason. We have as little reason to fear, if the Emperor should kill his fatlings, and send his pages to invite the princes of the empire to supper, that they should put those pages to death.

The invitation to the feast signifies preaching terms of salvation, and the murder of those sent

to set their feet upon. Among the Sabeans, every god had his star; but the stars being suns, it would not be practicable to live there, without participating the nature of fire. It is therefore an useless question, what the ancients thought of heaven? The best answer is, they did not think of it.

* St. Matthew, chap. xxii.

by

by the king, points out the persecution of those who preach wisdom and virtue.

The other parable * is that of a private man who invited his friends to a great supper, and when he was just sitting down to table, sent his servants to let them know, all things were ready: but one excused himself, because he had bought a piece of ground, which he was going to see; that excuse could not be admitted, for it is not usual to view and examine lands in the night. Another said, he had bought five yoke of oxen, which he was under a necessity of trying. This man's excuse was no more to be admitted than the other, because oxen are not tried at the hour of supper. A third said, he had just been married; his excuse was certainly a good one. The master of the family being extremely angry, caused the blind and halt to be brought to his entertainment, and seeing there were places not filled up, he said unto his servant, "Go out into the high-ways and hedges, and compel the people to come in."

It is true, that it is not said expressly, that this parable is a representation of the kingdom of heaven; and the words, "Compel them to come in," have been extremely perverted. But it is evident, that one servant could not forcibly oblige the people he met to go in and sup with his master. Besides, the guests having been compelled, would not be likely to render the entertainment very agreeable. Compel them to come in, therefore means no more, according to commentators of the highest credit, than pray, conjure, press, and prevail on them. What affinities, I would wish to know, can there be between this invitation, or this supper, and intolerance or persecution?

To take things literally, is it necessary to be blind or lame, and to be forcibly compelled to enter into the bosom of the church? Jesus saith in the

* St. Luke, chap. xiv.

same parable, "When thou makest a dinner or supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, nor thy rich kinsmen." Has it been ever inferred, that we should not dine with our relations and friends if they should have some riches?

Jesus Christ, after the parable of the feast,* says, "If a man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, his wife and children, his brethren and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple, &c. For who is there amongst you, when he would build a tower, does not sit down and count the cost?" Has any man ever been so unnatural, as to conclude, that he ought to hate his father and mother? And is it not easy to understand, that the meaning of the words is, hesitate not between me and your dearest affections.

This passage in the gospel by St. Matthew is quoted,† "Whoever heareth not the word, let him be as a heathen and a publican." It is certainly not meant, that we should persecute heathens, and the farmers of the king's revenues. It is true, they are cursed; but they are not delivered up to the secular arm. And so far from depriving these officers of any rights, we allow them the greatest privileges. It is the only profession condemned by Scripture; and it is the most favoured by all governments. Why, therefore, should we not shew indulgence to our mistaken brethren, when we are lavish of honours to those who collect our taxes?

Another passage which has been greatly abused is that in St. Matthew and St. Mark, where it is said, that Jesus being hungry in the morning, came to a fig-tree, on which there were only leaves, for it was not the season of figs; he cursed the fig-tree, and it dried up immediately.

Several different explications of this miracle have been given: but can any of them authorise persecu-

* St. Luke, chap. xiv. ver. 26, &c.

† St. Matthew, chap. viii. ver. 17.

tion? A fig-tree cannot bear figs in the beginning of March; it is cursed, and withers away. Is this a reason, that we should make our brethren pine and wither with anguish in all seasons of the year? Let us respect every thing in Scripture, which may raise difficulties in our inquisitive minds; but not pervert it, to render ourselves cruel and implacable.

A persecuting spirit which perverts all things, endeavours to justify itself by Christ's driving the buyers and sellers out of the temple, and by his sending a legion of demons out of a person possessed by them, into the bodies of two thousand unclean animals. But every one must perceive, that these are only instances of that justice which God himself deigned to execute on those who disobeyed his law. It was disrespectful to the house of the Lord, to change the square or court of it into a market for buyers and sellers. And notwithstanding the trade might be permitted by the sanhedrim and the priests, for the convenience of their sacrifices, the God to whom they sacrificed, although concealed under the human form, might without doubt put an end to this profanation. He might in the same manner punish those who brought into the country whole droves of animals, prohibited by a law which even he condescended to observe. Those examples have not the least relation to persecution on account of doctrines. The spirit of intolerance must be supported by very indifferent reasons, when it seeks every where the vainest pretences.

Almost all the other actions and words of Christ inculcate mildness, patience, and indulgence. The father of a family receives his prodigal son; the labourer comes at the last hour, and yet is paid as much as the others; the charitable Samaritan; and Jesus himself excuses his disciples for not fasting; he pardons the woman who had sinned; and contents himself with recommending fidelity to the woman taken in adultery. He even condescends to the innocent

nocent mirth of those who were guests at the marriage of Cana; who being warmed with wine, and demanding more, he had the goodness to perform a miracle in their favour, and changed their water into wine.

He does not break out into anger even against Judas, who was engaged to betray him. He commands Peter never to make use of the sword; he reprimands the children of Zebedee, who, after the example of Elias, wished to call down fire from heaven on a city where they had been denied a lodging.

In short, he himself died the victim of envy. If we may compare things sacred with things profane, and God with man, his death greatly resembled that of Socrates. The Greek philosopher perished by the hatred of sophists, the priests, and the leaders of the people; the Christian legislator sunk under the hatred of the Scribes, Pharisees, and priests. Socrates might have avoided death, but would not; Jesus Christ offered himself voluntarily. The Greek philosopher not only pardoned his calumniators and iniquitous judges, but he begged them to treat his children as they had treated him, if they should be happy enough, like him, to merit their displeasure; the Christian legislator, infinitely superior, petitioned his Father to forgive his enemies.

If Jesus Christ seemed to fear death; if the anguish he felt was so great, as to draw from him sweat mingled with blood, which is a very uncommon and violent symptom; it was because he condescended to all the weakness of humanity, which he had taken on him. His body trembled, but his soul was immovable; he taught us, that real fortitude and real greatness, consist in bearing evils, under which our nature sinks. It must be courage in the extreme, to seek death even while we fear it.

Socrates

Socrates had treated the Sophists as ignorant, and had convicted them of treachery: Jesus, in the use of his divine prerogatives, treated * the Scribes and Pharisees as hypocrites, fools, blind and mischievous persons, serpents, and a generation of vipers.

Socrates was not accused of attempting to form a new sect; nor was Jesus Christ accused of that offence.† It is said, that princes, priests, and all the council, sought false witnesses against Jesus to destroy him.

If they sought false witnesses, they did not accuse him of having preached publicly against the law. He was in fact obedient to the law of Moses from his infancy to his death. He was circumcised on the eighth day, like all the other children. If he was afterwards baptised in Jordan; it was a sacred ceremony among the Jews, as among all the people of the East. All legal impurities were washed away by baptism: thus they consecrated their priests; every priest plunged himself into the water at the feast of solemn expiation; and every proselyte was baptised.

Jesus observed all the ceremonies of the law; he fasted on all the days of the sabbath; he abstained from forbidden meats; he observed all the festivals; and he celebrated the passover just before his death; he was not accused of entertaining new opinions, or of having observed any strange rites. Born an Israelite, he always lived an Israelite.

Two witnesses accused him of having said, "that he could destroy the temple, and build it up again in three days." Such a declaration was incomprehensible by carnal Jews; but they did not produce an accusation of having attempted to form a new sect.

The high priest interrogated him, and said, "I command thee, by the living God, to tell us if

* St. Matthew, chap. xxiii.

† Chap. xxvi. ver. 61.

† Chap. xxvi.

"thou art Christ the Son of God." We are not informed, what the high priest meant by the *Son of God*. This expression was sometimes used to signify a just man,* as the words *son of Belial* were used to signify a wicked man. The gross minds of the Jews had no idea of a sacred mystery of a Son of God, God himself coming upon earth.

Jesus answered him, "Thou hast said: but I say unto you, that ye shall hereafter see the son of man sitting at the right hand of the power of God; coming on the clouds of heaven."

The enraged sanhedrim regarded the answer as blasphemy. The sanhedrim had no longer the power of life and death. They traduced Jesus before the Roman governor of the province, and falsely accused him of being a disturber of the public peace, of saying, they should not pay tribute to Cæsar, and calling himself the king of the Jews. It is, therefore, evident, that he was accused of an offence against the state.

Pilate, the governor, having learned that he was a Galilean, sent him back immediately to Herod tetrarch of Galilee. Herod thought it was impossible, that Jesus should aspire to be at the head of a party, or pretend to royalty. He treated him with contempt, and sent him again to Pilate, who had the ridiculous weakness to condemn him, to appease a tumult against himself; the more readily, because he

* It was indeed very difficult, not to say impossible for the Jews to comprehend, without a particular revelation, this ineffable mystery of the incarnation of the Son of God, of God himself. The sons of great and powerful men, are called "sons of God," in the sixth chapter of Genesis. In the same manner, large cedars are called in the Psalms, "the cedars of God." Samuel says, "a fear of God fell on the people;" that is, a violent fear. A high wind, is the wind of the Lord; and Saul's malady, the melancholy of the Lord. The Jews, however, seemed to have understood Jesus as meaning to say, that he was the son of God, in the proper sense of that phrase; but it was regarded as blasphemy; which is another proof that they were ignorant of the mystery of the incarnation, and of God the son of God, sent upon earth, for the salvation of men.

had already experienced a revolt of the Jews, as we are told by Josephus. Pilate had not the same generosity which was afterwards shewn by the governor Festus.

I now ask, which disposition hath the best claim to divine authority, a tolerant, or an intolerant? If you would resemble Jesus Christ, become martyrs, and not executioners.

CHAP. XV.

Testimonies against Intolerance.

IT is impious, in matters of religion, to deprive men of their liberty, or to prevent their making choice of a divinity. No man, no deity, would be gratified with forced services. *Apologetic, Chap. xxiv.*

If we were to use violence in defence of the faith, the bishops would oppose us. *St. Hilarius, B. i.*

Forced religion is not religion. We should persuade, and not compel. Religion cannot force itself. *Laëtantius, B. iii.*

It is an execrable heresy to attempt leading by force, by blows, and by imprisonments, those whom we have not been able to convince by reason. *St. Athanasius, B. i.*

Nothing can be more opposed to true religion than compulsion. *St. Justin Martyr, B. v.*

Shall we persecute those whom God tolerates? was the language of St. Augustin, before his disputes with the Donatists had rendered him severe.

Let no violence be done to the Jews. *Fourth Council of Toledo, Canon lvi.*

Advise, but do not force. *St. Bernard's Letters.*

We do not pretend to destroy errors by violence. *Address of the French clergy to Louis XIV.*

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We have always disapproved of rigorous means. *Assembly of the clergy, Aug. 11, 1560.*

We know that faith may be persuaded, but not commanded. *Flecbier, bishop of Nismes, Letter xix.*

We should not use even insulting terms. *Pastoral Letter of the bishop of Belley.*

You are to bear in mind, that the maladies of the soul are not to be cured by constraint and violence. *Pastoral Letter of Cardinal Camus in 1688.*

Grant civil toleration to all men. *Fenelon, archbishop of Cambray, to the Duke of Burgundy.*

Violent exactions in religion are evident proofs, that the spirit which actuates it, is at enmity with truth. *Dirois, doctor of the Sorbonne.*

Violence may produce hypocrites. We do not persuade, when we make our menaces resound around us. *Tillemont's Hist. Eccles. Vol. vi.*

It has appeared to us, agreeable to equity and right reason, to proceed in the steps of the ancient church, which never had recourse to violence, to establish or to promote the interests of religion. *Remonstrance of the Parliament of Paris to Henry II.*

Experience teaches us, that violence is capable of irritating, rather than curing an evil, which is rooted in the mind. *De Thou's Dedicatory Epistle to Henry IV.*

The true faith is not inspired by the thrusts of a sword. *Cerefer on the Reigns of Henry IV. and Louis XIII.*

It is a barbarous zeal, which would pretend to plant religion in the heart, as if persuasion could be the effect of constraint. *State of France, by Bou-lainvilliers.*

It is with religion as it is with love: commands have no effect; constraint has still less; we are in nothing so independent as in loving and believing. *Amelot de la Houssaie, on the Letters of Cardinal d'Ossat.*

If you have been so beloved by heaven, as to be favoured with a knowledge of the truth, you have been highly privileged. But should those who possess their father's inheritance, hate others who are not so happy? *Spirit of Laws*, B. xxv.

An immense volume might be composed of such passages. Our histories, our discourses, our sermons, our moral dissertations, our catechisms, all breathe, all teach the sacred duty of indulgence. By what fatality; by what art of contradiction, do we oppose in our conduct, the theory we are every day teaching? When our actions contradict our moral system, it is owing to our belief that we have an interest in practising contrary to what we teach. But there cannot be any advantage in persecuting those who are not of our opinion, and making ourselves hateful to them. We may repeat it, therefore, that intolerance is an absurdity. But it may be said, those who have an interest in restraining the consciences of others are not absurd. To those I would address the following dialogue.

CHAP. XVI.

A Dialogue between a dying Man, and one in perfect health.

AN inhabitant of a village, in his last agonies, was insulted by a man in good health, who said to him,

Wretch! think as I do immediately; sign this paper; confess that five propositions are contained in a book, which neither you nor I have read; adopt instantly the opinion of Lamfranc against Berengerius, of St. Thomas against St. Bonaventure; enter into the opposition of the second Council of Nice against the Council of Francfort; explain in an instant, how those words, "My father is greater than I am?" clearly

clearly signify, "I am as great as he is." Tell me, how the father communicates all to the son, except his paternity, or I will order thy body to be given to birds of prey; thy children shall not inherit thy property; nor thy wife her dower; thy family shall beg its bread, and be denied it by such persons as I am.

DYING VILLAGER.

I hardly understand what you say to me. Your menaces affect my ears confusedly, they make my mind uneasy, and my last moments dreadful. In the name of God, have pity on me!

BIGOT.

Pity on you! I can have none, if thou art not in every thing of my opinion.

DYING VILLAGER.

Alas! You perceive that in these last moments all my faculties are weakened; the avenues to my understanding are shut up; my ideas fly off; and all my thoughts are extinguished? Am I then in a condition to dispute?

BIGOT.

Well—If thou hast it not in thy power to believe as I do—say thou dost—and I shall be satisfied.

DYING VILLAGER.

How! am I to perjure myself to please you. I am going in a moment, before that God who punishes perjury.

BIGOT.

It does not signify! Thou wilt have the pleasure of being buried in consecrated ground; and thy wife and children will have something to live upon. Die

an hypocrite ! Hypocrisy is a good thing ; it is said to be the homage, which is rendered by vice to virtue. A little hypocrisy, my friend, what can it cost you ?

DYING VILLAGER.

Alas ! you hold God in derision, or you do not acknowledge him, since you require a falsehood from me at my last moments ; you, who must soon receive judgment from him, and answer for that falsehood.

BIGOT.

How ! insolent wretch ! Do I not acknowledge a God ?

DYING VILLAGER.

Pardon me, my brother ; I fear you have no knowledge of him. The Being whom I adore, re-animates my powers at this moment ; and I tell you with my dying breath, if you believe in God, you should treat me with charity. He has given me my wife and children ; do not make them perish with misery. My body, you may do what you please with ; I give it up to you. But I conjure you, believe in God.

BIGOT.

Do as I direct you, without reasoning ; it is my will ; I command you !

DYING VILLAGER.

What interest have you in thus tormenting me ?

BIGOT.

How ! What interest ! If I can obtain your signature, it will be worth a good canonry to me.

DYING

DYING VILLAGER.

Ah! my brother! behold my last moment. I am dying. I will pray to God to touch and convert you.

BIGOT.

I wish the impertinent creature at the devil, as he has not signed!—I will sign for him, and counterfeit his writing.

The following letter is a confirmation of the same moral.

*Letter to the Jesuit Le Tellier, from a beneficed priest.**

Reverend father,

May 6, 1714.

I obey the orders I received from your reverence, to point out to you the most proper measures to deliver Jesus and his society from their enemies.

I believe there are not remaining at this time in the kingdom, more than five hundred thousand Huguenots, some say a million, others fifteen hundred thousand: but whatever be the number, this is my advice, which, as it is my duty, I most humbly submit to your judgment.

First, All their preachers may be seized in one day, and may be all hanged at one time, and in one place. This should be done, not only for the greater edification of the people, but for the beauty of the spectacle.

Secondly, I would have all the fathers and mothers among them assassinated in their beds; because

* When this letter was written, the order of the Jesuits was not abolished in France. If that order had been oppressed and wretched, the author would certainly have respected it. But it should ever be remembered, the Jesuits were persecuted, because they had been persecutors; and their fate should be a warning to those, who being more intolerant, would oppress their fellow-citizens for not embracing their inhuman and absurd opinions.

if they were killed in the streets it would occasion some tumult; many might even escape, which ought, above every thing, to be prevented. This execution is a necessary corollary from our principles. For if it be our duty to kill an heretic, as many of our great theologians have proved, it must be evident all heretics should be killed.

Thirdly, On the next morning, I would marry all the daughters to good Catholics, as the country should not be too much depopulated after the last war; but boys of fourteen or fifteen years, already tainted with bad principles, which we cannot hope to destroy, my opinion is, they should be all castrated, that the race may not be reproduced. As for the other little children, they may be brought up in colleges, and be flogged till they have committed to memory the works of Sanchez and Molina.

Fourthly, I think under correction, that the Lutherans of Alsace should be treated in the same manner, because, in the year 1704, I have seen two old women of that country laughing on the day of the battle of Hochstet.

Fifthly, It may be a little more difficult to manage the Jansenists. I believe they may amount to six millions in number; but a spirit like yours need not be alarmed at this circumstance. I include among the Jansenists, all the parliaments who so unworthily maintain the liberties of the Gallican church. Your reverence will weigh, with your usual prudence, the means of subduing these seditious spirits. The gunpowder plot had not the desired success, because one of the conspirators indiscreetly wished to save the life of his friend: but as you have no friend, the same inconvenience is not to be feared; it will be very easy for you to blow up all the parliaments in the kingdom, by means of the composition invented by the monk Shwartz, called *pulvis pyrius*. I have calculated that, on an average, each parliament will require thirty-six barrels of powder; and multiplying

ing the twelve parliaments by the thirty-six barrels, we shall find the number wanted to be four hundred and thirty-two barrels, which, at a hundred crowns each, will amount to a hundred twenty-nine thousand six hundred livres; a very trifle for the reverend father-general.

The parliaments blown up, you will confer their offices on your congregationists, who are perfectly instructed in the laws of the kingdom.

Sixthly, It will be easy to poison the Cardinal de Noailles, who is a simple man, and unsuspicious of every thing.

Your reverence will employ the same means of conversion with several refractory bishops; their bishoprics, by a brief from the Pope, may be bestowed on the Jesuits; then, all the bishops being devoted to the good cause, and the *curé's* being judiciously chosen, with submission to your reverence, I would give the following advice.

Seventhly, As the Jansenists are said to come to the communion at least at Easter, it would not be amiss to scatter a little of that drug on the host, which was made use of to do justice on the Emperor Henry VII. Some caviler will tell me, perhaps, that in this operation, we may run a risque of dishonouring the Molinists with the death of rats. This is a serious objection; but there is no project which does not threaten danger in some way. If we were to be retarded and stopped by little difficulties, we should never accomplish any purpose. Besides, as the object here is to procure the greatest possible good, we must not be affected, if it bring with it some evil consequences, which deserve but little consideration.

We have nothing to reproach ourselves with. It is demonstrated, that the Jansenists, and those who pretend to be the Reformed, are the heirs of Hell. We only hasten the moment of possession.

It is no less evident, that Paradise belongs of right to the Molinists; if therefore they should be put
to

to death by mistake, without evil intention, we shall accelerate their joy. We are in one case, as well as the other, the ministers of Providence.

As to those who may be a little alarmed at the number to be destroyed, your paternal wisdom may induce them to recollect, that from the first flourishing days of the church to the year 1707, that is, in fourteen hundred years, theology has been the occasion of the massacre of more than fifty millions of men; and that I wish to strangle, cut the throat, and poison no more than six millions and a half.

It may be still objected, that my account is not just, and that I violate the rule of three; for, it will be said, If, in fourteen hundred years, only fifty millions of men were destroyed on account of theological distinctions, dilemmas and antidilemmas, and that it makes no more than thirty-five thousand seven hundred and fourteen for every year; and that by my method, six millions sixty-four thousand two hundred and eighty-five, with some fraction, are to be destroyed in the present year. But, in truth, this chicane is very childish; it may be said, it is impious; for is it not evident, that by my procedure, I shall save the lives of all Catholics to the end of the world? But I should never come to a conclusion, if I were to answer all cavils.

I am, with profound respect,
your reverence's most humble,
most devoted, and most humane,

R—,

Native of Angoulême, prefect of the
congregation.

The project was not executed, because father Tellier found some difficulties in executing it, and his reverence was banished the following year. But as it is expedient to examine those things which make for and against a question, it may be proper to enquire, in what case the views of father Tellier's correspondent

respondent may be partially pursued. It might appear severe to execute the entire project; but it is necessary to examine on what occasions we should break on the wheel, hang, or send to the galleys, those persons who are not of our opinion. This is the subject of the following article.

C H A P. XVII.

The only Cases in which Intolerance may be admitted in human Policy.

THAT a government may not have a right to punish the errors of men, it is necessary that those errors should not be crimes; they are crimes only when they disturb society, and they disturb society when they inspire fanaticism; it is necessary then, that men should cease to be fanatics, in order to merit toleration.*

If any number of young Jesuits, knowing that the church regards reprobates with horror, that the Jansenists have been condemned by a bull, which has also reprobated them, should set fire to the house of the fathers of the oratory, because Quesnel, one of those fathers, was a Jansenist, it is clear, that those Jesuits would deserve punishment.

* This proposition, if it could be maintained, would render ineffectual all the reasoning and eloquence of this treatise; which will ever be regarded with respect by the real friends of religious humanity and liberty, for the great use it has been of, rather than for the accuracy of its arguments, or the delicacy and brilliancy of its wit. The proposition stated above, is the common justification of all persecutors. All errors or none must be tolerated; and all judicious moralists and politicians will distinguish between opinions which should be at liberty in the utmost freedom and extravagance of error; and outward actions, which are subject to the regulation and restraint of the civil magistrate.

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In the same manner, if the Jesuits have taught culpable doctrines; if their institution is contrary to the laws of the kingdom, their society should be dissolved, and good citizens be formed out of turbulent priests; which, in fact, would be an imaginary evil, and a real benefit to them; for where is the hardship of being obliged to wear a short coat instead of a gown, or to be free instead of being a slave? Whole regiments are reduced and disbanded in time of peace, and we hear no complaints; why, therefore, should the Jesuits exclaim so violently, when they are disbanded for the sake of peace?

If the Franciscans, transported with holy zeal for the Virgin Mary, were to demolish the church of the Dominicans, who think that Mary was born in original sin, it would then be necessary to treat the Dominicans in the same manner the Jesuits have been treated.

The same may be said, in regard to Lutherans and Calvinists; they may alledge, we follow the suggestions of our conscience, it is better to obey God than man; we are the true flock, and ought to exterminate the wolves. In such a case, it is evident, they would be the wolves.

One of the most astonishing instances of fanaticism was in a little sect in Denmark, the distinguishing principle of which was the best in the world. These people wished to procure the eternal happiness of their brethren; but the consequences of this principle were singular. They knew that all infants who die unbaptized are damned, and that those who have the happiness to die immediately after receiving baptism, enjoy eternal glory; they sallied out and cut the throats of all the boys and girls whom they could find, and who had been lately baptized: that, undoubtedly, was doing them the greatest kindness; it was delivering them at once from sin, from the miseries of this life, and those of hell, and sending them infallibly to heaven. But these charitable people

ple did not consider, that it is not allowed to do a small evil to obtain a great good; that they had no right over the lives of these little infants; that fathers and mothers are in general so carnal, as to love to have their children near them, rather than to see their throats cut to send them to heaven. In a word, that the magistrates should punish murder, though perpetrated with a good intention.

The Jews seem to have a greater right than any persons to rob and murder us. For though there is a hundred examples of toleration in the Old Testament, there are also several examples and laws of a severe nature. God sometimes commanded them to kill idolaters, and to reserve only young girls just fit for marriage. They regard us as idolaters; and though we now tolerate them, they might, if they were masters, leave none of us alive, except our young girls.

They would be under an indispensable obligation to assassinate all the Turks; there can be no difficulty on this subject; for the Turks possess the countries of the Hittites, the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites, the Hivites, &c. All those people were devoted by a curse; their country, which was more than five and twenty leagues in length, was given to the Jews by several successive covenants; they ought to re-enter on their own possessions; the Mahometans have usurped them more than a thousand years.

If the Jews were at this time to reason thus, it is certain they would have no other answer but by being impaled.

These are almost the only cases in which intolerance appears reasonable.

CHAP. XVIII.

Account of a Controversy in China.

IN the first years of the reign of the great Emperor Cam-hi, a Mandarin of the city of Canton, hearing a noise in a neighbouring house, he enquired whether any person was murdered; he was answered, it was only an almoner belonging to the Danish company, a chaplain of Batavia, and a Jesuit, who were disputing. He desired they might be brought to his house, ordered them tea and refreshments, and begged to know the occasion of their quarrel.

The Jesuit answered, it was a thing extremely painful to him, who was always right, to have to do with persons who were always wrong; that, in the beginning of the discourse he had reasoned with the utmost modesty, but that in the end his patience had left him.

The Mandarin told him, in the mildest manner, how necessary politeness was in controversies, that in China they were not subject to such passions, and wished to know what they debated upon.

The Jesuit replied, My Lord, I wish you to judge in this affair; those two gentlemen refuse to submit to the decisions of the council of Trent.

That astonishes me, says the Mandarin. Then turning towards the two refractory persons, It seems proper to me, that you should shew a deference to the opinion of a great assembly. I do not know any thing of the council of Trent; but several persons are always better informed than one. No man should suppose he knows more than others, and that reason dwells only in his mind. We are thus taught by
our

our great Confucius; and, if you believe me, you will do well to submit to the council of Trent.

The Dane then said, My Lord speaks with great wisdom; we respect great assemblies as we ought; we accordingly adopt the opinions of several councils, which were held at the same time with the council of Trent.

Oh! if that be the case, said the Mandarin, I beg your pardon; you may be very right. I suppose then, you and the Hollander are of the same opinion against this poor Jesuit.

Not at all, said the Hollander. That man holds opinions almost as extravagant as those of the Jesuit, who has the appearance of so much mildness before you. I can hardly keep myself within decent bounds.

I do not understand you said the Mandarin. Are not you all three Christians? Did not you all three come to teach Christianity in our empire? And ought you not therefore to have the same doctrines?

You see, my Lord, said the Jesuit, those two persons are mortal enemies, and yet both dispute against me; it is therefore evident, that both are in the wrong, and that reason is to be found only on my side. That is not so evident, said the Mandarin; it is very possible that all three should be in the wrong. I have the curiosity to hear you one after the other.

The Jesuit then pronounced a long discourse; the Dane and Dutchman shrugged up their shoulders, and the Mandarin could not comprehend any thing he heard or saw. The Dane spoke in his turn; his adversaries regarded him with contempt: but the Mandarin had not clearer conceptions of the matter in contest. The Dutchman had the same fate. At last, all three spoke together, and offered each other the grossest insults. The honest Mandarin had a great difficulty in making himself heard, when he exerted himself and said, "If you wish to have your doctrine tolerated here, you must tolerate

" each

"each other, and avoid giving offence by your contentions."

Just as the Jesuit had left the house of the Mandarin, he met a Dominican missionary, to whom he said he had gained his cause, adding, that truth must always triumph. The Dominican answered, If I had been there, you would not have gained it, for I should have convicted you of falsehood and of idolatry. The dispute grew warm, and the Dominican and Jesuit were pulling down each other by the hair. The Mandarin, informed of their behaviour, sent them both to prison. A deputy mandarin asked the judge, "How long would your excellency have them confined?" "Till they are agreed," said the judge. "Ah!" said the deputy, "they will remain in prison to the end of their lives." "Well," said the judge, "let it be till they forgive each other." "They will never pardon each other," replied the deputy, "I know them." "Well then," said the Mandarin, "let it be till they seem to forgive each other."

C H A P. XIX.

Whether it be useful to keep up the Superstition of the People?

SUCH is the weakness and perversion of mankind, that it is better they should be subject to all kinds of superstition, except those which are sanguinary, than to live without religion. Man has always stood in need of a bridle; and though it was ridiculous to sacrifice to fauns, dryads, and naiads, it was more reasonable and useful to adore these fantastic images of the Deity, than that he should deliver himself up to Atheism. An Atheist, who should be a man
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of abilities and power, and be of a violent disposition, would be a scourge as fatal to the world as a bloody enthusiast.

When men have not true notions of the Divinity, false ideas must be entertained instead of them, as in times of distress, we trade with base money, because we have not that which is good. A Pagan feared to commit a crime, lest he should be punished by false gods. The Malabar trembles at the displeasure of his pagod. Where there is a society established,* religion is necessary; the laws take cognizance of public crimes, and religion of those which are private.

But when once men embrace a pure and holy religion, superstition becomes not only useless, but very dangerous. We should not endeavour to feed with acorns, those whom God is pleased to feed with bread.

Superstition is to religion, what astrology is to astronomy, the very foolish daughter of a very wise mother. Those two daughters have long held dominion over all the earth.

In those ages of barbarism, when there were hardly two feudal lords who had a New Testament in their houses, it might be pardonable to present the vulgar with fables; I mean to those feudal lords, their weak wives, and the brutes, their vassals. They were made to believe, that St. Christopher carried the infant Jesus from one side of the river to the other; they had their lessons in tales of witches and demoniacs; they readily imagined, that St. Genou cured the gout, and St. Colara sore eyes. Children

* As the positions of Mr. de Voltaire may be made use of to answer particular purposes, it may be necessary to observe, that his province was that of wit and eloquence, and not of investigation and reasoning. He always appears embarrassed and confused, among the springs of human institutions and actions; but when formed into great streams, and producing great effects, no man could so instantaneously command the world to observe their benefits or injuries.

believed in goblins; their fathers in the girdle of St. Francis; and relicks were innumerable.

The rust of so much superstition still adheres to the people, while religion itself is purified and improved. We know, that when Mr. de Noailles, bishop of Chalons, ordered the pretended relick of the holy navel to be taken away, and thrown into the fire, all the city of Chalons joined to prosecute him; but his courage was equal to his piety; and he soon persuaded the people, that Jesus Christ might be adored in spirit and in truth, without having his navel in the church.

Those who are called Jansenists, contributed not a little towards insensibly rooting out of the spirit of the nation, the greater part of those false ideas, which dishonoured the Christian religion. The opinion was given up, that it was sufficient to repeat the prayer of thirty days to the Virgin Mary, to obtain whatever could be asked, and to sin with impunity.

At last, the common people entertained suspicions, that it was not St. Genevieve who gave and withheld the rain, but that it was God himself who disposed the elements. The monks have been astonished, that their saints perform no more miracles; and if the authors of the life of St. Francis Xavier were to return into the world, they would not venture to write, that the saint had raised nine persons from the dead; that he was at the same time on the sea and on the land; and, that having dropped his crucifix into the sea, a crab brought it up to him.

The case has been the same with excommunications. Our historians tell us, when king Robert was excommunicated by Pope Gregory the Fifth, for having espoused his god-mother, the Princess Bertha, his domestics threw out at the window the provisions which had been served up to him, and that the Queen Bertha was brought to bed of a goose, as a punishment for this incestuous marriage. A Maître d'Hotel, to an excommunicated person, would hardly,

hardly, at this time, throw his dinner out at the window; and it would not be easily believed, that in such a case a queen would be delivered of a bird.

If there be some Convulsionists in the obscure parts of a suburb, their disorder is a wretched one, with which only the lowest of the populace are attacked. Reason is daily making its way into the shops of tradesmen, as well as the hotels of lords. We should, therefore, cultivate the fruits of this reason; especially, as it is impossible to prevent their budding. We cannot govern France, after being enlightened by a Pascal, a Nicole, an Arnauld, a Bossuet, a Descartes, a Gassendi, a Bayle, a Fontenelle, &c. as it was governed in the times of Garassies and Menot.

If the masters of error, I mean the great masters, who were for so long a time paid, and honoured, for brutalizing the human race, were to ordain, at this time, that we should believe the seed must rot before it sends out blades; that the earth is immoveable on certain foundations, that it does not revolve around the sun; that the tides are not the natural effect of gravitation; that the rainbow is not formed by the refraction and reflection of the rays of light, &c. and if they aimed to give authority to their ordinances by passages of the holy scriptures misunderstood, how would they be regarded by persons of any knowledge? Would the term, *brutal*, be thought too strong in regard to them? And if these sage masters should recur to force and persecution, to establish the dominion of their insolent ignorance, would the appellation of *savage beasts* be misapplied to them?

In proportion, as the superstitions of monks are becoming contemptible, so do bishops become respectable, and the officiating clergy are esteemed; they do good, while the monkish superstitions brought here over the Alps, do much harm. But of all superstitions, is not that the most dangerous, which induces us to hate our neighbour for his opinions? And is it not evident, that it would still be more rea-

sonable to adore the holy navel, the holy prepucē, and the milk and robe of the Virgin Mary, than to detest and persecute a brother?

CHAP. XX.

Virtue more valuable than Science.

NO dogmas, no disputes; no disputes, no calamities—If this be not true, I am mistaken. Religion is instituted to make us happy in this life, and in that which is to come. What is necessary to make us happy in a future life?—To be just.

And to be happy in this, so far as the condition of our nature will permit—what is necessary?—To be merciful.

It would be the highest degree of folly to attempt bringing all mankind to think uniformly in metaphysics. We might, with much greater ease, subdue the whole universe by arms, than the minds of all the inhabitants of a single city.

Euclid very easily persuaded all men of the truths of geometry—Why? Because there is not one of them, which is not a corollary of this short axiom, *two and two make four*. But the case is different with the complicated principles of metaphysics and theology.

When Alexander, a bishop, and Arius or Arius, a priest, began to dispute in what manner the *logos*, or word, was an emanation from the father, the Emperor Constantine wrote to them in the following words, which are recorded by Eusebius, and by Socrates, “You are great fools, to dispute on things which you cannot understand.”

If the parties had been wise enough to agree, that the emperor was in the right, the Christian world
I would

would not have been drenched in blood for three hundred years.

In effect, what can be more ridiculous, and more horrible, than to say to men, "My friends, it is not enough that you should be faithful subjects, dutiful children, tender parents, and equitable neighbours; that you practise all the virtues; that you cultivate friendship, shun ingratitude, and adore Jesus Christ in peace: it is further necessary, that you should know how a being is begotten from all eternity, without being created from all eternity; and if you should not be able to distinguish the omission in the hypostasis, we declare that you shall be burnt to all eternity; and in the meantime we will begin your punishment, by cutting your throats?"

If a decision of this kind, had been presented to an Archimedes, to a Possidonius, to a Varro, to a Cato, to a Cicero, what answer would they have made?

Constantine did not persevere in the resolution of imposing silence on the two parties. He might have ordered the chiefs of those logical ergotisms, to repair to his palace; he might have demanded, by what authority they disturbed the world. "Have you the titles of the divine family? What can it be to you, that the *logos* was created or begotten, provided good morality is preached, and men practise it as far as they are able? I have committed many faults in my life, and so have you: you are ambitious, and so am I: the empire has cost me many villainies and cruelties: I have assassinated almost all my relations, and I repent of it: I wish to expiate my crimes, by rendering tranquility to the Roman empire: do not prevent me from doing the only good, which can bury my ancient barbarities in oblivion: assist me to end my days in peace." Perhaps he might not have prevailed on the disputants; perhaps he was to be flattered by

presiding in a council in a long crimson robe, and his head loaded with jewels.

We see, however, what opened a passage to all those calamities, which proceeded from Asia to overwhelm the west. There issued from every contested verse, a fury armed with a sophism, and a poignard, which made all men mad and cruel. The Huns, the Heruli, the Goths, and the Vandals, who came afterward, did infinitely less harm; for the greatest they did, was to engage, in the end, in the same fatal disputes.

C H A P. XXI.

Universal Toleration.

IT does not require great art, or studied eloquence, to prove, that Christians should tolerate each other. I shall go further, and say, that we should regard all men as our brethren. What! a Turk my brother? a Chinese my brother? a Jew? a Siamese? Yes, without doubt; for are we not all children of the same father, and creatures of the same God?

But these people despise us, and treat us as idolaters! It may be so; but I shall only tell them, they are to blame. It seems to me, I should stagger the haughty obstinacy of an Iman, or a Talapoin, if I spoke to them in the following manner:

This little globe, which is but a point, rolls in universal space, in the same manner as other globes; and we are lost in the immensity. Man, a being about five feet in height, is assuredly a thing of no great importance in the creation. One of those beings, called men, and who are hardly perceptible, says to some of his neighbours in Arabia, or in the country of the Cafres, "Attend to what I say; for the God

"of all these worlds hath enlightened me. There

“ are nine hundred millions of little ants, such as
“ we are, on this earth ; but my ant-hill alone is the
“ care of God, all the rest have been hateful to him
“ from all eternity ; we only shall be happy ; all
“ others will be eternally wretched.”

They would then stop me, and ask, who is this madman, who utters such folly ? I should be obliged to answer each of them, It is you. I might then take occasion to meliorate their dispositions into something like humanity ; but that I should find difficult.

I will now address myself to Christians ; and venture to say to a Dominican, who is an inquisitor, “ My
“ brother, you know, that every province of Italy
“ has its jargon ; that they do not speak at Venice,
“ or at Bergamo, as they do at Florence. The
“ Academy *de la Crusca* has fixed the general disposition and construction of the language ; its dictionary is a rule from which no deviations are allowed ; and the grammar of Buon Mattei is an infallible guide, which must be followed. But do
“ you think, that the consul, or president of the
“ academy ; or, in his absence, Buon Mattei could
“ have the conscience, to order the tongues of all
“ the Venetians and Bergameses to be cut out, who
“ should persist in their provincial dialects ?”

The inquisitor would answer me, “ The cases are
“ very different. The question here is concerning
“ the salvation of your soul ; it is for your good,
“ that the court of inquisition ordains, that you
“ should be seized, on the deposition of a single
“ person, though he be infamous, and in the hands of
“ justice ; that you should have no advocate to plead
“ for you ; that the very name of your accuser should
“ be unknown to you ; that the inquisitor should promise you mercy, and afterwards condemn you ;
“ that he should apply five different kinds of torture
“ to you, and that afterwards you should be whipt or
“ sent to the galleys, or burnt as a spectacle in a religious

“ religious ceremony.* Father Ivonet, Doctor Chucalon, Zarchinus, Campegius, Royas, Telinus, Gomarus, Diabarus, Gemelinus, lay down these things as laws, and this pious practice must not be disputed.” I would take the liberty to answer, “ My brother, perhaps you are right; I am convinced of the good you wish to do me: but, without all this, is it not possible to be saved?”

It is true, that these absurd horrors do not always deform the face of the earth; but they have been very frequent; and we might collect materials to compose a volume on these practices, much larger than the gospels which condemn them. It is not only cruel to persecute in this short life those who do not think as we do, but it is audacious to pronounce their eternal damnation. It seems to me, that it little becomes the atoms of a moment, such as we are, thus to anticipate the decrees of the Creator. I am very far from opposing that opinion, “ that out of the church there is no salvation.” I respect it, as well as every thing taught by the church: but, in truth, are we acquainted with all the ways of God, and the whole extent of his mercy? Is it not permitted that we should hope in him, as well as fear him? Is it not sufficient that we are faithful to the church? Is it necessary that every individual should usurp the power of the Deity, and decide, before him, the eternal lot of all mankind?

When we are mourning for a king of Sweden, of Denmark, of England, or of Prussia, do we say that we mourn for a reprobate who will burn eternally in hell? There are in Europe forty millions of inhabitants, who are not of the church of Rome; shall we say to each of them, “ Sir, as you are to be infallibly damned, I would neither eat, deal, or converse with you.”

* See that excellent book, intituled, *The Manual of the Inquisition.*

Is it to be supposed, that an ambassador of France, presented for an audience to the Grand Seignior, would say to himself, "His highness will be burnt to all eternity, because he has submitted to circumcision?" If he really believed that the Grand Seignior was a mortal enemy to God, and the object of his vengeance, could he have spoken to him? Should he have been sent to him? With whom could we have dealings in trade? What duty of civil life could we ever fulfil, if we were in fact possessed with the idea, that we were conversing with persons eternally reprobated?

Oh, ye followers of a merciful God! if you have cruel hearts! If, in adoring him, whose whole law consists in these words, "Love God and your neighbour," you have incumbered that pure and holy law with sophisms, and incomprehensible disputes! If you have lighted the fires of discord, sometimes for a new word, sometimes for a letter of the alphabet! If you have annexed eternal torments to the omission of some words, or some ceremonies, which other people cannot be acquainted with—I must say, while shedding tears for mankind, "Transport yourselves with me to that day, in which all men will be judged, and when God will render to every one according to his works."

"I see all the dead, of past and present ages, appearing in his presence. Are you very sure that our Creator and Father will say to the wise and virtuous Confucius, to the legislator Solon, to Pythagoras, to Zaleucus, to Socrates, to Plato, to the divine Antonini, to the good Trajan, to Titus the delight of mankind, to Epictetus, and to many others who have been the models of human nature: Go, monsters! Go, to endure chastisements, infinite in their intenseness and duration! Let your punishments be eternal as my being!—And you, my well-beloved Jean Chatel, Ravailac, Damiens, Cartouche, &c. who have
"died

“ died according to the forms which are enjoined,
 “ sit at my right hand, and partake of my domi-
 “ nion, and of my felicity !”

You shrink with horror at these words ; and after they have escaped me, I have nothing more to say to you.

CHAP. XXII.

Prayer to God.

I No longer then look up to men ; it is to thee, the God of all beings, of all worlds, and of all ages, I address myself—If weak creatures, lost in immensity and imperceptible to the rest of the universe, may dare to ask any thing of thee, who hast given all things, and whose decrees are immutable and eternal ! Deign to regard with pity the errors inseparable from our nature ; let not those errors prove our calamities ! Thou hast not given us hearts to hate, and hands to destroy each other ; dispose us to mutual assistance, in supporting the burthen of a painful and transitory life ! Let the little differences in the garments which cover our frail bodies ; in all our imperfect languages, in our ridiculous customs, our imperfect laws, our idle opinions, in our ranks and conditions, so unequal in our eyes, and so equal in thine : let all those little shades which distinguish the atoms called men, be no more signals of hatred and persecution ! Let those who light tapers at noon-day, to glorify thee—bear with those who content themselves with the light of thy sun ! Let not those who throw over their garments a white surplice, while they say it is the duty of men to love thee, hate those who say the same thing in a black woollen cloak ! Let it be equal, to adore thee in a jargon formed from an ancient, or from a modern language ! May those whose vest-
 ments

ments are dipped in scarlet, or in purple who domineer over a small parcel of the small heap of the dirt and mud of this world; and those who possess a few round fragments of a certain metal, enjoy without pride, what they call grandeur and riches; and may others regard them without envy; for thou knowest, there is nothing in these things to inspire envy or pride!

May all men remember that they are brethren! May they regard with horror, the tyranny exercised over the mind, as they do rapine, which carries away by force the fruits of peaceable labour and industry! If the scourges of war be inevitable, let us not hate and destroy each other in the bosom of peace; let us employ the instant of our existence to praise, in a thousand different languages from Siam to California, thy goodness which hath granted us that instant!

C H A P. XXIII.

Postscript.

WHILE I was employed on this work, with the only view of rendering men more compassionate and humane, another man was writing with a view of a different kind. Every one has his particular opinion, This man has printed a small code of persecution, entitled, "The Harmony of Religion and Humanity." The printer committed an error; and you should read "Inhumanity." The author of this holy libel shelters himself under the reputation of St. Augustin, who having first inculcated meekness and humanity, afterwards enjoined persecution, because he found himself in the stronger party, and because he often changed his opinion. He also quotes Bossuet, bishop of Meaux, who persecuted the celebrated Fenelon, archbishop of Cambray, as guilty of having

ving published, "that God was deserving of love
"for his own sake."

Bossuet was eloquent, I will acknowledge; the bishop of Hippo, though sometimes inconsistent, was more eloquent than the Africans of his time, I will also acknowledge: but I must take the liberty of saying to both of them, with Armanda, in the Learned Ladies, "When we take a character for our
"pattern, we should copy it on the most pleasing
"sides."

I would say to the bishop of Hippo, "My Lord,
"you have changed your opinion, permit me to adhere to your first opinion. I really believe it to be
"the best."

I would say to the bishop of Meaux, "My Lord,
"you are a great man. I find you have at least as
"much learning as St. Augustin, and are much
"more eloquent; but why should you torment
"your brother, who was as eloquent as you in a different style, and who was more amiable?"

The author of the holy libel in favour of Inhumanity, is neither a Bossuet nor an Augustin; he appears to me as one who would make an excellent inquisitor. I wish he was at Goa, at the head of that amiable tribunal. Besides, he is a statesman, and displays before us some grand principles of politics. "If there should be amongst you," says he, "a great
"number of heretics, manage them, persuade them:
"but if there be only a small number, have recourse
"to the gallows and the galleys, and you will find
"they'll answer extremely well." This is what he advises in the 89th and 90th pages of his book.

Thank God, I am a good Catholic. I have no occasion to fear what the Huguenots call martyrdom. But if this man should ever be prime-minister, as he flatters himself in this libel may be the case, I give him notice, that I shall set out for England the very day his patent is made out.

In

In the mean time, I must thank Providence, that persons of his disposition are always bad reasoners. He has ventured to quote Bayle among the partisans of intolerance; that is very sensible and clever; and because Bayle allows that incendiaries and rogues should be punished, our author concludes that we should pursue with fire and sword those honest men who are quiet and peaceable.

Almost all this book is a copy of the apology for the transactions on St. Bartholomew's day. It is the Apologist or his echo. However this may be, it is to be wished, that the state may never be governed either by the master or the scholar.

But lest they should ever become masters, I anticipate my duty in presenting this question, on the subject of two lines in the ninety-third page of the holy libel.

"Is the welfare of a whole nation to be sacrificed
"to that of the twentieth part?"

Supposing there are in France twenty Roman-Catholics to one Huguenot, I do not pretend, that the Huguenot should eat the twenty Catholics; but why should the twenty Catholics eat the Huguenot; why should the poor Huguenot be hindered from marrying? Are there not bishops, abbots, monks, who have estates in Dauphiné, in the Gevaudan, Agde, and Carcassonne? And have not these bishops, abbots, monks, some among their farmers, who have the misfortune not to believe in transubstantiation? Is it not the interest of these bishops, abbots, monks, nay and of the public, that these farmers should have numerous families? And should those only who communicate in one kind be permitted to get children? This, in truth, is neither just nor commendable.

The author says, "The revocation of the edict
"of Nantes has not produced the inconveniencies
"which have been attributed to it."

If more has been attributed to it than it has produced, it may be called exaggeration; and it is the
fault

fault of almost all historians to exaggerate : but it is also the fault of all controversial writers to reduce to nothing the evil with which they are reproached. Let us credit neither the doctors of Paris, nor the preachers of Amsterdam.

Let us take for judge, the Count D'Avaux, ambassador in Holland, from 1685 to 1688. He says, [page 181, tom. i.] that one man had offered to discover more than twenty millions, which those who were oppressed and persecuted had sent out of France. Louis XIV. in answer to M. D'Avaux, says, " The account I daily receive of the infinite number of conversions, leave me no doubt that the most obstinate will follow the example."

We may see by this letter of Louis XIV. that he was very well persuaded of the extent of his power. It was said to him every morning, " Sire, you are the greatest monarch in the universe ; you have but to speak, and the universe will deem it glory to think as you do." Pelison, who was enriched in the place of first commissioner of the finances ; Pelison, who had been three years in the Bastile, as the accomplice of Fouquet ; Pelison, who from a Calvinist was become a deacon and a beneficed priest ; who composed prayers for the mass, and love songs to Iris ; who had obtained the place of comptroller, and that of converter of heretics ; Pelison, I say, used to produce every three months a long list of abjurations, at the rate of seven or eight crowns each ; and he made his master believe, that he could, when he pleased, convert all the Turks at the same price. His courtiers relieved each other in a succession of deceptions ; was it therefore possible that he should not be deceived ?

The same M. D'Avaux informs the king, that a person called Vincent kept more than five hundred workmen in the neighbourhood of Angoulême, and that his quitting the kingdom would be a very great injury. [Page 194. tom. v.]

He

He also speaks of two regiments, which the Prince of Orange was then raising, by means of French refugee officers. He mentions sailors who had deserted from three French ships, and served in those of the Prince of Orange. Besides the two regiments already mentioned, he was forming a company of cadets, consisting of refugees, to be commanded by two captains. [Page 240.] This ambassador writes again to M. De Segnelay, on the 9th of May, 1686, "that he could not disguise the pain he felt at seeing the manufactures of France established in Holland, whence they would never return."

Add to all these testimonies, those of all the intendants of the kingdom in 1693, and judge if the revocation of the edict of Nantes has not produced more evil than good, notwithstanding the opinion of the respectable author of the "Harmony of Religion and Inhumanity."

A marshal of France, well known for his superior genius, said, some years ago, "I will not pretend to say whether dragooning has ever been necessary; but I will say, it is necessary to lay it aside."

I confess, I had some apprehension of having gone too far in publishing the letter of Father Le Tellier's correspondent; in which the prefect of the congregation proposes the use of barrels of gunpowder. I said to myself, I shall not be believed, and the letter will be regarded as a forgery. Happily my scruples were removed, on reading the following gentle words in the "Harmony of Religion and Inhumanity." [Page 149.]

"The total extirpation of the Protestants would no more weaken France, than bleeding would a sick person of a good constitution."

This compassionate Christian, who has said that the Protestants made the twentieth part of the nation, is for shedding the blood of that twentieth part; and considers the operation, as he would the taking of one basin out of three which surgeons usually fill at a bleed-

a bleeding. God preserve us, as well as him, from any pretence to require the three-twentieths.*

Now, if this good man proposes to destroy the twentieth part of the nation, why may not the friend of father Le Tellier propose to blow up, to poison, or to cut the throats of one third? It is therefore extremely probable that the letter to father Le Tellier was really written to him.

The pious author at length concludes, that intolerance is an excellent thing; because, says he, it has not been expressly condemned by Jesus Christ. But Jesus Christ has not expressly condemned those who should set fire to the four corners of Paris; is that a reason for canonising the incendiaries?"

Thus, while the gentle and beneficent voice of Nature is heard on one side, Fanaticism, the enemy of Nature, is rending the air with its howlings; and while Peace offers itself to men, Intolerance is forging arms. Oh, ye arbiters of nations, who have just given peace to Europe! decide the dispute between the spirit of peace and that of contention!

CHAP. XXIV.

Sequel and Conclusion.

WE have been informed, that, on the 7th of March, 1763, the council of state being assembled at Versailles, the ministers assisting, and the chancellor presiding at it, Mr. De Crofne, master of requests, reported the affair of Calas, with the impartiality of a judge, the precision of a man perfectly informed, and with the simple and real eloquence

* This passage is very difficult to be translated, as it contains a double allusion, to the surgeon's three basons, and to an oppressive tax called *Trois Vingtiemes*.

of a senatorial orator, which alone is suitable to such an assembly. In the gallery a prodigious croud of persons of all ranks waited with impatience the decisions of the council. In a short time, a message was sent to the king, that it was the unanimous opinion of the council, the parliament of Toulouse should send up the minutes of their proceedings, and the motives of their judgment, which had caused John Calas to be broken alive on the wheel. His majesty approved of the decree of the council.

Humanity and justice therefore have not quitted the abodes of men; and they reside principally in the council of a beloved king. The interests of an unhappy family, consisting of obscure citizens, have interested his majesty, his ministers, his chancellor, and all the members of his council, and have been discussed with as much attention as the most important objects of war or peace. A love of equity, and a regard to the interests of mankind, have actuated all the judges. Praise be to that God of Mercy, who alone inspires men with equity, and with all the virtues!

Here we declare, that we have never known either the unfortunate Calas, whom the judges of Toulouse put to death on the weakest evidence, in opposition to the edicts of the king, and to the laws of all nations; or his son, Mark-Antony, whose extraordinary death led the judges into the error; or the mother, who is as truly respectable as she is miserable; or her innocent daughters, who have accompanied her upwards of two hundred leagues, to present their misfortunes and their virtues at the foot of the throne.

We declare before that Being who knows every thing, that we have been induced only by a regard to justice, truth, and peace, to commit our thoughts to writing on the subject of toleration, and in the affair of John Calas, whom a spirit of intolerance had sacrificed.

K

We

We had no thoughts of offending the eight judges of Toulouse, by saying they were deceived. The council of state has presumed the same thing. On the contrary, we have opened a way for them to justify themselves to all Europe. They have only to acknowledge, that equivocal testimonies, and the clamour of a mad populace, had misled their zeal for justice; to ask pardon of the widow; and to repair, as much as in them lies, the entire ruin of an innocent family, by joining their good offices with those who succour them in their affliction. They have put the father to death unjustly; it is their duty to supply his place to the children; provided these orphans should be willing to receive from them so weak a proof of a very just repentance. It would be honourable in the judges to make the offer, and in the family to refuse it.

It would particularly become the Sieur David, capitoul of Toulouse, who was the first persecutor of innocence in this case, to set the example of remorse. He insulted the father of a family, while expiring on the scaffold. That cruelty was without example: but as God is merciful, and willing to forgive, it is the duty of men also to forgive those who atone for their offences.

The following letter has been sent me from Languedoc, dated February 20, 1763.

“
 “
 ‘ Your book on Toleration appears to me full of
 “ humanity and truth: but I am afraid it will do
 “ more injury than service to the family of Calas.
 “ It may wound the eight judges who voted for the
 “ wheel, and they may petition parliament, that
 “ the book may be burnt; and fanatics, of which
 “ there is always a number, will answer the voice of
 “ reason with howls of fury, &c.”

The

The following was my reply.

“ The eight judges of Toulouse may, if they please, have my book burnt. Nothing can cost them less trouble. The *Provincial Letters*, which were of much superior value, were burnt. Every man may burn in his own house any books and papers which may be disagreeable to him.

“ My book cannot be of service or injury to the family of Calas, with whom I am not acquainted. The king’s council is impartial and firm ; it judges according to the laws, according to equity, of memorials and proceedings, and not of a treatise which has no reference to jurisprudence, and the subject of which is different from the affair under consideration.

“ Folios may be written for or against the eight judges of Toulouse, and for or against Toleration ; neither the council, nor any tribunal, would look on these as memorials or briefs in a cause.

“ This Treatise on Toleration is a petition which humanity presents with great humility to power and wisdom. I sow a grain, which may in time produce a harvest. We may hope every thing from time ; from the goodness of the king ; from the wisdom of his ministers ; and from that spirit of reason, which begins to diffuse its light on all sides.

“ Nature says to all men, I have brought you all into the world weak and ignorant ; to vegetate a few minutes on the earth, and to manure it with your carcases. As you are weak, succour each other ; as you are ignorant, instruct and bear with each other. If you were all of the same opinion, which will certainly never be the case, and there were only one who differed from you, it would be your duty to forgive him ; for I make him think as he does. I have given you hands to cultivate the earth, and a small glimmering of rea-

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“ son to conduct you. I have planted in your hearts
 “ a seed of compassion, that you may assist each
 “ other to bear the burthen of life. Do not smother
 “ that seed; do not corrupt it; know that it is
 “ divine; do not substitute the wretched fury of the
 “ schools for the voice of Nature.

“ I alone unite you, in spite of yourselves, by
 “ your mutual wants; amidst those cruel wars which
 “ you so inconsiderately undertake, and which, form
 “ a continual scene of crimes, chances and misfor-
 “ tunes. I alone prevent the fatal consequences of
 “ endless divisions in a nation, between the nobility
 “ and the magistracy; between those two bodies and
 “ the clergy; and even between the citizen and the
 “ the husbandman. They are unacquainted with all
 “ the limits of their prerogatives, but they hear, in
 “ the end, however unwillingly, my voice speaking
 “ to their hearts. I alone maintain equity in tribu-
 “ nals, where, without me, every thing would be de-
 “ livered up to uncertainty and caprice, in the midst
 “ of a confused mass of laws, made of tenat random,
 “ and to answer a present occasion; differing from each
 “ other in different provinces and cities; and almost
 “ always contradicting each other in the same place.
 “ Unassisted and alone, I can inspire justice, when
 “ the laws inspire only chicane; he who listens to
 “ me, judges always rightly; while he who endea-
 “ vours to reconcile contradictory opinions, always
 “ wanders into errors.

“ There is an immense edifice, whose foundations
 “ I have laid with my own hands. It was solid and
 “ simple; all men might have entered it in safety;
 “ but they have been desirous to add to it ornaments
 “ the most fantastical, the most uncouth, and the
 “ most useless; the building is tumbling in ruins on
 “ all sides; men take up the stones, and throw them
 “ at each other's heads. I cry, Hold! clear away
 “ the fatal rubbish which you have brought together;
 “ dwell

“ dwell peaceably with me in that mansion which
 “ is mine, and which is not to be shaken?”

C H A P. XXIV.

An Article added since the first Publication of the Treatise; in which an Account is given of the last Decree of the Council in favour of the Family of Calas.

FROM the seventh of March, 1763, to the time in which the definitive judgment was pronounced, two years elapsed; so easy is it for fanaticism to take away the life of an innocent person, and so difficult for reason to obtain justice to his memory. Those long delays it was necessary to bear, because they were occasioned by forms. The less those forms had been observed in the condemnation of Calas, they were to be the more rigorously attended to by the council of state. It took up more than a year to oblige the parliament of Toulouse to send the minutes of their proceedings, in order to be examined, and to be reported by the council. M. de Crosne was entrusted with that laborious undertaking. An assembly of near eighty judges reversed the decree of the parliament of Toulouse, and ordered a revival of the whole process.

Almost all the tribunals of the kingdom were then occupied by other important affairs. The expulsion of the Jesuits, and the abolition of their society in France, were subjects of consideration. The Jesuits had been intolerant; and they were persecuted in their turn.

The indecent extravagance of *Billets de Confessions*, of which they were believed to be the secret authors, and the propriety of which they publicly maintained, had roused up against them the resent-

ment of the nation. An immense bankruptcy of their missionaries; a bankruptcy believed to be fraudulent, completed their ruin. The words *missionaries* and *bankrupts*, so little formed for association, inclined the minds of the people to their condemnation. In short, the ruin of Port-Royal; the insults offered to the remains of many celebrated men at their interment, digging up their bones in the beginning of this century, by orders which the Jesuits alone had dictated, disposed the minds of all men against their expiring credit. Their history may be seen in that excellent book, entitled *The Destruction of the Jesuits in France*; a work impartial, because it is that of a philosopher; written with the acuteness and eloquence of Pascal, and with a superiority of intelligence, which is not clouded, as in Pascal, by those prejudices, which have sometimes seduced great men.

That important transaction, in which the partisans of the Jesuits said, that an outrage was offered to religion, and in which most men imagined religion was revenged, suspended all attention to the process in the affair of Calas for many months. But the king having committed the final decision of it to a tribunal, called *Les Requêtes de l'Hotel*, the same public, which is fond of passing from one scene to another, forgot the Jesuits, and the family of Calas occupied all its attention.

The chamber of requests *de l'Hotel* is composed of masters of requests, who sit on processes between the officers of the court, and on causes, which the king refers to their determination. A tribunal could not have been fixed upon, better instructed in this affair. It consisted of the same magistrates, who had twice given judgment on the preliminary steps to the revision, and who were perfectly acquainted with the merits and forms of this business.

The widow of John Calas, her son, and young Lavaisse, surrendered themselves, and were put in prison;

son; the old Catholic woman, who had been the servant of the family, and who would not quit it, at a time, when it was supposed she had murdered a child and a brother: this poor creature was brought to Paris from the centre of Languedoc. The court deliberated on the same evidence, which had served to condemn John Calas to the wheel, and his son Peter to exile.

It was then a new memorial appeared, drawn up by the eloquent Mr. de Beaumont, and another by the young Lavaisse, so unjustly included in the criminal procedure by the judges of Toulouse, and whom, to complete their absurdity, they had not acquitted. That young man himself drew up a state of his case, which was deemed worthy to appear with that of Mr. de Beaumont. He had a double advantage in speaking for himself, and in behalf a family in whose sufferings he had shared. He might have been set at liberty, if he had only said, he would desert the family of Calas, when the father and mother were accused of having assassinated their son. He was menaced with punishment; the rack and death had been held before him: a word would have set him at liberty; he chose to expose himself to punishment, rather than pronounce that word, which would have been a falsehood. His detail of facts was given with a candour so noble, so simple, so free from ostentation, that it affected those whom it could not convince, and conferred on him a reputation which he did not seek.

His father, an advocate of character, had no share in this work; and he saw himself suddenly rivalled by his son, who had never practised at the bar.

In the mean time, persons of the first consideration resorted in crowds to visit the widow Calas in prison; where her daughters were shut up with her. They were affected even to tears. Humanity and generosity were lavish of their assistance. What is called charity afforded them none. Charity, which

is so often niggardly and insulting, is the virtue of devotees; and the devotees were inimical to the family of Calas.

The day at last arrived, when innocence obtained a full triumph. Mr. de Baquancourt having reported the procedure, and having stated the minutest circumstances of the affair, all the judges unanimously declared the family innocent; cruelly and wrongfully condemned by the parliament of Toulouse. They did justice to the memory of the father. They permitted the family immediately to commence actions against their judges, in order to be reimbursed their expences, and obtain damages for their injuries: which the magistrates of Toulouse ought to have offered themselves.

This occasioned an universal joy in Paris; people crowded the public squares and walks; they ran to behold a family which had been so cruelly injured, and so ably justified; they clapped the judges as they passed, and loaded them with benedictions. And to render the spectacle still more affecting, it was the ninth of March, the same day of the month on which John Calas perished by the most cruel punishment.

The judges of the court of requests had done complete justice to the family of Calas; and in that they had only done their duty. There is a further duty, that of beneficence, rarely practised by tribunals, who seem to think themselves instituted meerly to be equitable. The masters of the court of requests resolved to draw up a petition to his majesty, in the name of their whole body, praying he would repair, by his bounty, the ruin of the family. The letter, or petition, was written. The king answered it, by ordering thirty-six thousand livres to be paid to the widow, who was to give three thousand to that virtuous woman her servant, who had persisted in defending the truth, by defending her master and his family.

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The king by this goodness, as well as by other actions, merited the surname which the love of the nation has given him. May this example serve to inspire men with a spirit of toleration, without which fanaticism would desolate the earth, or, at least, involve it always in sorrow ! We know that, in the present case, the interest only of a single family was concerned ; and that the rage of sectaries has destroyed millions. But now, when the Christian world is reposed under the wing of peace, after ages of carnage, the miseries of the family of Calas are likely to make an impression, similar to that of thunder in the serenity of a fine day. Cases of this kind are uncommon ; but they do happen ; and they are the effects of that gloomy superstition, which induces weak minds, to impute crimes to those who do not think as they do.

ORIGINAL PIECES

RELATING TO THE

DEATH OF CALAS,

AND THE

SENTENCE PRONOUNCED ON HIS FATHER AT
TOULOUSE, &c. &c.

ORIGINAL PICTURES

RECEIVED

DEATH OF CALVIN

AND HIS WIFE

LASTING IMPRESSION OF HIS FATHER

THE BOOK OF THE

111

ORIGINAL PIECES.

EXTRACT OF A LETTER

From the Widow Calas. Dated the 15th of June, 1762.

NO, Sir—I will leave nothing untried to prove our innocence; preferring death, when free from imputation, to a life imbittered with the charge of criminality. After the death of my husband, the magistrates of Toulouse continued to oppress us, and cruelly persecuted me and my deplorable family. They sent, as you know, and took from me my dear daughters, the only consolation I had; and conveyed them into two different convents in Toulouse. They were led to the place, which had served as the theatre of all our horrid misfortunes! They even separated my children! But the king has had the goodness to permit me to have the care of them; and I can only bless him.

The following is an exact detail of our misfortunes, as they have really befallen us.

On the 13th of October, 1761, an unfortunate day for us, Mr. Gober Lavaisse came from Bourdeaux, where he had been for some time, to see his parents, who were then at their farm; and having endeavour-
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ed to procure a horse for hire to go to them, he came to our house about four or five o'clock in the afternoon. My husband told him, as he was not going into the country, if he would sup with us, he would do us a pleasure. The young man consented; and came up into my room; from whence, contrary to my usual custom, I had not gone out that day. The first thing he said to me was, "I am to sup with you; your husband has invited me." I signified my satisfaction; and left him a few moments, while I gave orders to my servant. I went also in search of my eldest son, Mark Anthony, whom I found alone, and thoughtful, in the shop, that he might go for some Roquefort cheese. He was generally the purveyor of that article, as he was a judge of it. "Here," I said to him, "Go for some Roquefort cheese. I will give you money, and when you have paid for it, return what remains to your father." I then returned to my room to the young man [Lavaisse] whom I had left there. A few moments after, he left me, saying he would go again to the stables, to see if there were any horses returned, as he was determined to set out the next morning for his father's farm.

When my eldest son had bought the cheese, it was supper time [about seven o'clock]; all the family came in; and we sat down at table. At supper, which was not very long, we talked of indifferent things; and among others, the antiquities of the town-hall. My younger son, Peter, mentioned some; and his brother corrected him, because he did not relate things well or justly.

While we were eating the desert, that unhappy young man, my eldest son, got up from the table, as was his custom, and went into the kitchen, which joined the room in which we supped. The servant said to him, Are you cold, Sir? warm yourself. Far from it, he said, I burn; and went out. We continued at table some moments after him; and then Mr. Lavaisse, my husband, my son, and I, went into
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that chamber, which you well know, and have lain in. The two former sat on the sofa, my younger son on a great chair, and I on a common one; and there we entered into a conversation. My younger son fell asleep. About a quarter before ten, Mr. Lavaisse took leave of us. We roused my son out of his sleep, that he might attend the young Lavaisse. We gave him the candle; and they went down together.

The instant they were down, we heard the most alarming cries, without being able to distinguish what was said. My husband ran down, and I remained trembling in the gallery, not having courage to descend, and not knowing what could be the occasion of the alarm.

However, seeing no person coming up, I thought it best to descend, which I did. At the foot of the stairs I found Lavaisse, and asked him with precipitation, what was the matter? He begged me to go up again; that I should know. He repeated his entreaties so often and so earnestly, that I returned with him into my chamber. He wished to save me the anguish of seeing my son in the condition he was in, and he went down again. But the uncertainty I was in, was too violent to permit me to remain long where I was: I called the servant to me, and said to her, "Jannette, go down and see what is the matter. I know not what can have happened, and I tremble with apprehension." I put the candle into her hand, and she went down; but not returning to give me any account, I went down myself. Great God! what were my grief and my surprize, when I saw my dear son extended on the ground! However, I did not believe him dead; and I ran for some Hungary water, imagining that he was ill and had fainted; and as hope is the last thing that quits us, I gave him all possible assistance to recover him, not permitting myself to imagine that he was dead. We all flattered ourselves; and a surgeon was called in,
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who stood by me, without my seeing or perceiving him, till he told me, it would be of no use to do any thing more; that he was dead. I pleaded with him, it could not be; and begged he would redouble his endeavours, and examine with the utmost care, which he did in vain; it was too true: and during the time, my husband was leaning on the counter, the image of despair; so that my heart was wrung on more accounts than one; by the deplorable spectacle of my son lying dead before me, and by the fear of losing a husband who was dear to me, who abandoned himself wholly to grief, and would hear of no consolation: it was in this state, justice found us; we were seized in my chamber, where we had been persuaded to retire.

This is the history of the affair, exactly as it has happened. And I pray God, who knows our innocence, to punish me eternally, if I have added or diminished an *iota*, and if I have not told the truth in every circumstance. I am ready to seal the truth with my blood, &c.

LETTER

From Donatus Calas to the Widow Calas, his Mother.

Chatelain, June 22, 1762.

My dear, unfortunate, and respectable mother,

I Have seen your letter of the 15th of June, in the hands of a friend, who wept in reading it, and I moistened it with my tears. I dropt on my knees. I prayed to God to exterminate me, if any of my family was guilty of the abominable parricide imputed to my father, to my brother, and in the horrid infamy of which you, the best and most virtuous of mothers, was also involved,

In Switzerland, where a few months since I was obliged to go on my business, I learnt the inconceivable disaster of my whole family. I heard that you, my dear mother, my father, my brother Peter, and Mr. Lavaisse, (a young man remarkable for his probity and the gentleness of his manners) were put in irons at Toulouse; that my elder brother, Mark-Anthony, had gone out of the world in a dreadful manner; and that the hatred which so often springs from a diversity of religions, accused you all of his murder. The excess of my grief threw me into an illness, and I wished myself in my grave.

I was soon informed, that some of the populace of Toulouse had clamoured at our door, on seeing my dead brother, "It was his Protestant father, it was his Protestant family, who assassinated him; he was desirous of becoming a Catholic,* and would have abjured the following day; his father strangled him with his own hands, believing he performed a work agreeable to God; he was assisted in the sacrifice by his son, by his wife, and by the young Lavaisse."

It was added, that Lavaisse, a young man twenty years of age, arrived from Bourdeaux on that very day, had been chosen in an assembly of the Protestants to be the executioner of the sect, and to strangle those who should change their religion. They said publicly in Toulouse, that this is the ordinary jurisprudence of the Protestants.

The absurd extravagance of the calumnies gave me some relief. The more they discovered of folly, I hoped the more from the wisdom of your judges.

* It was said, he had been seen in a church. Was that a proof that he intended to abjure his religion? Catholics are seen daily flocking to hear celebrated preachers in Switzerland, Amsterdam, Geneva, &c. In short, it has been proved, that Mark-Anthony Calas took no steps towards changing his religion; so that there was no motive for the pretended anger of his parents.

I trembled, when I learnt by all the public accounts, that they had commenced, by ordering my brother Mark-Anthony to be buried in a Catholic church, on the imaginary supposition, that he was to have changed his religion. I was told, that the fraternity of White Penitents had performed a solemn service over him, as if he had been a martyr; that a shrine had been erected, and that his figure or image, holding a palm in its hands, was placed on that shrine.

I foresaw too well the effects of that impetuosity, and fatal enthusiasm. I knew that, my brother being regarded as a martyr, my father, you, my brother Peter, and young Lavaisse, would be deemed executioners. I remained a whole month in a kind of stupid horror. I said to myself, to very little purpose, "I know the sentiments of my late unhappy brother! I know he had not any design of abjuring; and I am very sure, if he had wished to have changed his religion, my father and mother would never have constrained his conscience; they were very well satisfied, that my brother Louis turned Catholic; and they allowed him an annuity: nothing is more common in the families of that province, than to see brothers of different religions; their brotherly love is not abated; that happy toleration, that holy and divine maxim which we profess to hold, does not suffer us to condemn any one; we presume not to act in the province of God; we follow the dictates of our conscience, without disturbing that of others."

It is incomprehensible, I said, that my father and mother, who have not treated any of their children ill, in whom I have never seen the effects of anger or caprice, and who, in all their lives, have not committed the slightest violence, have suddenly passed from an habitual gentleness of thirty years, to the unnatural fury, which would impell them to strangle, with their own hands, their eldest child, from
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the chimerical apprehension, that he would quit a religion, which he had no disposition to quit.

These, my dear mother, were the ideas which comforted me ; but I had new alarms by every post. I wished to throw myself at your feet, and to kiss your chains. Your friends, my protectors, prevented me, by considerations as powerful as my grief.

Having passed almost two months in that horrible uncertainty, without receiving any letters from you, or being able to send any to you, I at last saw the memorials published to prove your innocence. I saw, in two of those cases, the same account which you gave in your letter of the 15th of June—that my unhappy brother, Mark Anthony, had supped with you a little before his death ; and that none of the company, but himself, left the table, till that fatal moment in which they saw him dead.*

You will pardon my recalling all those horrible images to your mind ; I have no need to do it. Our recent misfortunes, continually retrace the images of those which have already befallen you ; and you would not forgive me, if I should not open anew the wounds you have received.

* There cannot well be a higher degree of probability, than that Mark Anthony Calas put an end to his own life. He was dissatisfied with his situation ; he was gloomy, melancholy, and often read books on suicide. Lavoisier, a little before supper, found him in a deep reverie. His mother had also perceived the same thing. The words, *I burn*, when the servant proposed his drawing near the fire, should have great weight. He went down stairs alone after supper. He executed his fatal resolution. His brother, two hours after, as he was accompanying young Lavoisier to the door, was a witness to this spectacle. They both cried out ; the mother came ; the body was cut down—and that was the first cause of the sentence against the unfortunate father—He did not immediately say to the neighbours, and to the surgeons, my son has hanged himself ; he must be dragged through the streets, and my family must be dishonoured. He did not own the truth, till it could not be longer concealed. His paternal piety was the cause of his ruin. It was thought he must have been guilty of the death of his son, because he did not immediately discover what he had done.

You cannot imagine, my dear mother, what a favorable impression it made on the world, that my father and you, my brother and young Lavaisse, had not quitted each other a moment, from the time of that melancholy supper, until you were imprisoned.

They reasoned thus in all parts of Europe, where our misfortune was made known. I am informed of it on good authority; and it is proper that I should acquaint you.

It was said, if Mark Anthony Calas were put to death by any one of his family, it must have been with the concurrence and assistance of the whole, with the knowledge of Lavaisse, and even of the servant; for it has been proved, that the family, Lavaisse, and the servant,* were together the whole time, and the judges were satisfied with the proofs of this fact. Either all the prisoners were guilty, or none. It is not possible, that a family, which to that time had been irreproachable; a tender father; a good mother; a brother who loved his brother; a friend just come to town, and who had supped with them by accident, should all, at one time, in a moment, without reason or motive, have taken the most extraordinary resolution of committing a parricide. Such a conspiracy, under those circumstances, was not possible;† and the execution of it must be still more extraordinary. It is, therefore, extremely probable,

* That servant was a Catholic, and very devout. She had been in the family thirty years, and had assisted greatly in the conversion of one of Calas's sons. Her testimony was, therefore, of great weight; and it is wonderful, it should not have prevailed against the most improbable presumptions.

† When could the father have hanged his son? Not before supper, for they supped together; it could not be during supper, or after supper; for the father, and the whole family, were above, when the son got down to the warehouse. How could the father, even assisted by the family, hang his son to a door, on the ground floor, without a struggle, and a violent tumult? In short, why should the father hang his son, merely to take him down again? What absurdity in these accusations?

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that the judges must repair the injury they have done to innocence.

This afforded me some support in my affliction. But all ideas of consolation were soon dissipated. In the month of March, the news was brought of the execution of my father. A letter, which my friends would have concealed, but which I snatched from them, brought me news, which I have not power to relate; which you have so often been obliged to hear.

Support me, my dear mother, while I write to you trembling. Give me some share of your courage; it is equal to the horrors of your situation. Your children dispersed; your eldest son lying dead before you; your husband, my father, expiring by the most cruel punishment; your dower lost; indigence and dishonor, succeeding to consideration and fortune—Behold your condition! But God remains to you; he has not abandoned you; the honour of my father is dear to you; you brave the horrors of poverty, of disease, and even of shame, to take a journey of two hundred leagues, and at the foot of the throne, to implore the justice of the king! If you can obtain a hearing, you certainly will have justice.

What can be set in opposition to the cries and tears of a mother, a widow; and to the demonstrations of reason? It has been proved, that my father did not leave you; that he continued with you and all the other persons accused, in the apartment above, while my brother must have died below. This is sufficient. My father was condemned to the most extreme and most dreadful punishment; my brother was banished by a second sentence; and, notwithstanding his banishment, he was put into a Dominican convent in the same city. You are at liberty. Lavaissé is at liberty. Why is my brother only banished, if he is guilty of the death of his brother? Why, if he is banished to Languedoc, is he shut up in a convent at Toulouse? Nothing is to be comprehended in this

matter. Everybody endeavours to find out the reasons of these judgments, and this conduct; but nobody succeeds.

All I know is, that the judges, on false evidence, wished to condemn to death, all those who were accused; and that they contented themselves with putting my father to death, imagining that, while expiring in torments, he would confess the crime of the whole family. I am told they were astonished, when my father, in the midst of tortures, called on heaven to witness his innocence, as well as yours, and died, praying that the God of mercy would pardon those rigorous judges whom calumny had deceived.

It was then they pronounced that decree, which restored to you your liberty; but not your dissipated fortune; not your honour undeservedly tarnished, if honour has any dependence on the injustice of men.

I do not accuse the judges. They would not willingly have assassinated innocence under the forms of law. I impute all to calumny; to false proofs rendered more injurious by the manner of producing them; to the tales of ignorance; to the extravagant mistakes of some enthusiasts;* to the clamours of a mad multitude; and to that furious zeal which determines, that those who do not think as we do, are capable of the greatest crimes.

It will be easy for you to dissipate these illusions,† which have imposed on judges otherwise upright and sincere.

* When the father and mother came down about ten o'clock at night, and found their son, Mark Anthony, dead and cold, they sobbed and cried in a pitiable manner; those signs of paternal anguish, were imagined to be the sobs and cries of Mark Anthony Calas, who had been dead two hours. It was owing to this mistake, that a father and mother, who were weeping and lamenting the death of a son, were supposed to have assassinated him; and on this mistake judgment was pronounced upon them.

† One of the witnesses pretended he had heard Calas the father threaten his son some weeks before. What relation could the menaces

sincere. For if my father alone has been condemned ; my father alone must have committed the murder. But how could a man, seventy years old, who had the rheumatism in his legs for more than two years ; how could such a man, alone, have hanged a young person of twenty-eight, whose prodigious strength and extraordinary address were well known ?

If the word *ridicule* could be admitted among such horrors, the extreme ridiculousness of the supposition, without farther examination, would obtain the reparation which is due to us. What wretched proofs ! What vague discourse ! What popular rumours, could hold against the demonstration of physical impossibility ?

Here I fix myself. It is impossible, that my father, that even two persons should have strangled my brother. How absurd to suppose, that my father alone was guilty, when not one of those accused, had quitted him one moment ! It follows, therefore, either that the judges have condemned an innocent man, or have prevaricated, when it was their duty to rid the world of four monsters, who had been guilty of the most horrible crime.

The more I love and respect you ; the more I am restrained in writing to you. The excess of horror, into which you have been plunged, only serves to shew the excess of your misfortunes, and of your virtue. You now demand death, or the justification of my father. I join with you. I demand to be put to death with you, if my father be guilty.

Let the judges produce the minutes of the criminal process ! It is all I wish ; it is wished for by the world ; and they cannot refuse it. All nations, and

naces of a father have with the murder of a son ? Mark Anthony Calas spent his time at tennis, billiards, and in the fencing school. His father threatened him, if he did not change his manner of living. Is that just correction of fatherly love, given perhaps with some vivacity, any proof of the most atrocious and unnatural crime ?

all religions are interested in this matter. Justice is painted with a bandage on its eyes; but should it also be dumb? When all Europe requires an account of so extraordinary a sentence, why should that account be delayed?

The punishment of wickedness is ordained for the public security. The accusations, on which that punishment is inflicted, ought to be public. Men cannot long hold in obscurity, what should appear in open day. When we would give an idea of the tyrants of antiquity, we say they decided arbitrarily on the lives of men. The judges of Toulouse are not tyrants; they are the ministers of the laws; they judge in the name of a just king: if they have been deceived, it was because they were men; they may acknowledge it, and become themselves your advocates at the throne.

Apply to the chancellor,* and to the king's ministers with confidence. You are timid; you are afraid to speak; but your cause will speak for you. Do not imagine, that the people at court, are so inflexible, so heart-hearted, so unjust, as they are re-

* The chancellor will undoubtedly recollect those words of his predecessor, M. Daguesseau in his sixteenth speech to the parliament. "Who would believe, that a first impression may sometimes decide on life and death? A fatal concurrence of circumstances, which one might say, fortune had brought together on purpose to effect the destruction of an unhappy person; a crowd of witnesses, who are silent, and therefore the more to be feared, depose against innocence; the judge is prepossessed; his anger is roused; and even his zeal seduces him; become more an accuser than a judge, he sees only what serves to condemn, and he sacrifices to the reasoning and feelings of his mind, a man whom he would have saved, had he admitted only legal proofs. An unforeseen event sometimes discovers that innocence which had sunk under the weight of conjectures, and dissipates those deceitful proofs, which in a false light had dazzled the mind of the magistrate. The truth discovers itself through the clouds of probability, but it comes too late; the blood of innocence demands vengeance on the prejudices of its judge; and the magistrate is reduced to lament through his life a misfortune, which his repentance can never repair."

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presented to be by impudent writers, to whom men of all conditions are equally unknown. The king's desire is justice; it is the basis of his government; and his council has certainly no interest, that justice should not be administered. Believe me, compassion and equity have their abode in the human heart; turbulent passions and prejudices often stifle those sentiments in us. But the king's council can have no passion which will be excited against you; nor any prejudices to affect their understandings.

What will be the event? The criminal process will be laid before the public. It will then be seen, whether the absurd opinion of a * surgeon, and some frivolous misapprehensions of the people, are to be opposed to the most evident demonstrations, which innocence has ever been able to produce. The judges will be blamed for not having personally examined into an affair of so much importance; and for having suffered themselves to be misled by ignorance. The judges themselves will join their † voices to
ours.

* Very stupid natural philosophers have pretended, it was impossible that Mark Anthony Calas could have hanged himself. Nothing, however, is more practicable: that which ought to be deemed impossible is, that an old man should have hanged a robust young person to one of the doors below, while the old man was in his chamber.

N. B. The father, when he came to the place where his son was hanging, had attempted to cut the cord, which had given way itself—he thought he had cut it. He appeared to have been deceived in this unimportant fact, and the judges thought him guilty.

It is also said, that the father overwhelmed, and out of his senses, said, when interrogated, “that all the company went from the “room where they had supped to the same chamber.” Peter answered, “You forget, my father, that Mark Anthony was gone “down before we left the room.” “Yes—it is very true,” said the father. “You contradict each other, and therefore you are “guilty,” said the judges. If this anecdote be true, on what circumstances are the lives of men made to depend?

† Let proofs be opposed to proofs, depositions to depositions, and conjectures to conjectures, the advocates, who have undertaken the
cause

ours. If they should refuse access to their registers as the means of discovering truth, that truth would force itself into the public view with more impetuosity.

Perfist then, my dear mother, in your undertaking. Never regard our property. We are five children without bread; but we have honour; and we prefer it, as you do, to life. I throw myself at your feet. I bathe them with my tears. And I implore your blessing, with a respect which is heightened by your miseries.

DONATUS CALAS.

cause of the accused, are ready to demonstrate the innocence of the man who has been sacrificed. If the object in view were conviction, they might appeal to all Europe. If it were a judicial examination, they would appeal to all the magistrates; even to those of Toulouse, who must consider it as a matter of honour as well as duty, to repair as much as possible, a misfortune, the horror of which haunts many of them to this day. Let them look into their own minds, and recollect by what kind of reasoning they have been directed. Have not they said, Mark Anthony Calas could not have hanged himself, therefore others hanged him; he supped with his family and with Lavaisse; therefore he was hanged by his family and by Lavaisse; he was seen two or three times in a church, therefore his family, which was Protestant, hanged him from a principle of religion! These are the presumptions with which they have excused themselves.

Now, the judges say to themselves, without doubt, Mark Anthony Calas put an end to his life; it is impossible, his father should have hanged him; therefore his father alone should not have perished. It has been proved to us, that the mother, the son Peter, Lavaisse, and the servant, who alone could have partaken in the guilt of the father, were all innocent; for we have set them all at liberty: it is, therefore, proved that Calas the father, who did not quit them for an instant, was innocent as they were.

It is acknowledged, that Mark Anthony Calas discovered no thoughts of abjuring his religion; it is impossible, therefore, that his father should have sacrificed him to the fury of fanaticism. There can be no certain testimony in this matter. We have only rumours and reports; and these vain testimonies cannot balance the declaration of Calas on the wheel, and the declared innocence of the other persons accused. Calas, therefore, whom we put to death, was innocent; and it is our duty to weep over, and lament the judgment we have given. This is not the first example of so just and so noble a penitence!

Memo-

*Memorial of Donatus Calas, in Behalf of his Mother,
and his Brother.*

I Acknowledge, that all our family was born and educated to the profession of a religion which is not that of France: it is well known, how much it violates a man's integrity, in some cases, to change his religion. My father and my mother persevered in the religion of their parents. We may possibly have been deceived by those, who told us that the same religion was formerly professed in Germany, France, and England, when the council of Francfort assembled by Charlemagne, condemned the worship of images; while Ratram, under Charles the Bald, made Jesus Christ say, in many parts of his writings, "Do not believe that you actually eat my flesh and drink my blood:" and while that homily was chanted in most churches, which is now preserved only in libraries—"We receive the body and blood of Christ, not actually in the flesh, but spiritually."

When, as I have been informed, more elevated notions of this mystery were fabricated: when the whole œconomy of the church was changed, several bishops did not change with it; particularly Claudius, Bishop of Turin. He retained the dogmas and the worship, which the council of Francfort had adopted, and which he believed to be those of the primitive church. He preserved a flock attached to this worship. But the greater number prevailed in Europe, and they bestowed on our ancestors the names of Manicheans, Bulgarians, Patarins, Lollards, Vaudois, Albigenfes, Huguenots, and Calvinists.

Such are the ideas acquired by the examination which my youth has hitherto admitted. I do not mention them to exhibit a vain erudition; but to abate,

abate, in the eyes of our Catholic brethren, the hatred which may rouse them against us. My opinions may be erroneous, but my good intentions are not criminal.

We have been guilty of great faults like other men. We have imitated the fury of the Guises; but we fought for Henry IV. whose memory is so dear to Louis XV. The horrible outrages committed by the frantic peasants of the Cevennes, and which the licentiousness of the dragoons had occasioned, are buried in oblivion, as well as those of the league. We are the children of Louis XV. as well as his other subjects; we revere him as our common father; we obey all his laws; we pay, with alacrity, the imposts necessary for the support of his just wars; we respect the clergy of France, who make their glory, as we do, to consist in submitting to his royal and paternal authority; we reverence the parliaments, which we consider as the defenders of the throne and the state, against the enterprizes of Rome. In these sentiments I have been educated; and it is thus men think among us, who have had any education. When we stand in need of any favours, we expect them in silence, from the goodness of the best of kings.

It is not the business of a young man, plunged in misfortunes, to determine which of the two religions is most agreeable to the Supreme Being. All I know is, that the fundamental duties of religion are the same in well disposed minds, all of whom equally love God, their country, and their king.

The dreadful transaction which I mean to relate, must excite the justice of a beneficent king and of his council; the charity of the clergy, who regret even our errors; and the generous compassion even of the parliament, which has plunged us into the deepest distress, to which an honest family could have been reduced.

We are five children, actually in the state of orphans; for our father has been put to the most dreadful

ful death; our mother at a distance from us, without aid and without support, is seeking the justice due to the memory of my father. Our cause is that of all families; it is that of nature; it has interested the state, religion, and even the neighbouring nations.

My father, John Calas, was settled as a merchant at Toulouse forty years. My mother is an English woman; but she is, by her grand-father, of the house of Garde-Montesquieu, and related to the principal nobility of Languedoc. Both of them brought up their children with tenderness; none of us ever received from them either blows, or other effects of ill-humour; there never were, perhaps, better parents.

If it were necessary to add the testimonies of strangers to my own, I could produce them in great numbers.* All those who have lived with us, know that neither my father, nor any of his family, were restrained in their choice of religion: it was always referred to God and our own conscience. My father was so far from that zeal, which contracts the mind, that he had always a Catholic servant in his house.

That servant, who was very devout, contributed to the conversion of one of my brothers, who was called Louis. He remained in the family after his conversion, and was never reproached: there cannot be a stronger proof of the moderation and goodness of my parents.

My father declared in the presence of his son Louis, and before Mr. de la Motte, counsellor in parliament,

* I declare and testify, in the presence of God, that I lived four years at Toulouse, in the house of Mr. and Mrs. Calas; that I have never seen a family in greater harmony, nor a father more tender; that during the four years I never saw him in a passion; and that if I have any sentiments of honour, of integrity, and moderation, I owe them to the education I received in that family.

Geneva, July 5,
1762.

Signed J. Calvet, treasurer of the
Swiss, German and Italian posts
“ that

“ that provided the conversion of his son were sincere, he could not disapprove of it ; because, by “ restraining consciences, men are only made hypocrites.” Those were his words, as my brother Louis has testified in a public declaration, at the time of the dreadful catastrophe in our family.

My father allowed him four hundred livres a year ; and not one of the family ever uttered the least reproach of his conduct. Such was the spirit of mildness and union, which my father and mother had established in our family. God blessed them ; we enjoyed a decent competency ; we had friends ; and during the forty-years we lived at Toulouse, we had neither a law-suit, nor a quarrel with any one. Sometimes, perhaps, persons in trade, jealous of the prosperity of a house which was of a different religion from the prevailing one, would excite the populace against us ; but our constant and steady moderation seemed always to soften and dissipate their hatred.

From this happy state, we are now fallen into the most horrible situation. My brother, Mark Anthony Calas, the source of all our misfortunes, was of a gloomy and melancholic disposition. He had some talents ; but not being in a situation to be admitted in the law, without a certificate of his being a Catholic ; and not being qualified for trade, he saw himself excluded from any way of making his fortune ; and sunk under a profound melancholy. I have often observed him reading passages on suicide in different authors ; sometimes in the works of Plutarch ; sometimes in those of Seneca ; and sometimes in those of Montaigne. He had committed to memory, the poetic translation of the famous soliloquy of Hamlet, so much admired in England ; and some parts of a French tragi-comedy, called Sidney. I had no apprehension, that he would ever put in practice such fatal lessons !

On the 13th of October, 1761, a son of Mr. Lavaissé, a celebrated advocate of Toulouse, returned
from

from Bourdeaux. I now relate events to which I was not a witness; but of which I am but too well informed. The young Lavaisse was desirous of seeing his father, who was then in the country. He tried to procure horses, but could not. By chance, my father, and my brother, Mark Anthony, who was the particular friend of Lavaisse, met him, and asked him to sup with them. They sat down at table at seven o'clock, according to one of the simple customs of a regular and industrious family, who conclude their daily occupations early, in order to be up before the sun. Father, mother, children, and their friend, made a frugal meal, on the first floor. The kitchen was adjoining to the room in which they eat. The same Catholic servant brought in the dishes, heard, and saw every thing. I cannot avoid repeating here, what has been already said by my unhappy and respectable mother. My brother, Mark Anthony, left the table sometime before the rest of the company, and went into the kitchen. The servant said, Would you go near the fire? *Ab*, said he, *I burn*. After having uttered these words, which expressed too much; he went down towards the warehouse with a gloomy and pensive air.

Our family, and young Lavaisse, continued in conversation until a quarter before ten, without any persons having left the room. Mr. Lavaisse took his leave. My mother desired her second son, Peter, to take a candle, and light him. They went down. But what a spectacle before them! They saw the door of the warehouse open; the two leaves of it brought near each other; a stick made use of in packing bales, placed on each of them; and my brother hanging to it by a cord, formed into a noose; stripped to his shirt; his hair adjusted; and his folded cloathes laid on the counter.

At this sight, they cried out, O, my God! O, my God! ran up stairs, and called my father. My mother followed trembling; but they stopped, and con-

conjured her to remain where she was. They hastened to call the surgeons, and to inform the magistrates. The frightened mother went down with the servant; and the tears and lamentations were redoubled. What could be done? Was my brother to be left without assistance? My father embraced the body of his dead son; the cord gave way, because one end of the stick slipped from the leaf of the door; the body being lifted up by my father, not keeping the stick where it had been placed. My mother tried to make her son swallow some spirituous liquors; the servant multiplied her assiduities and assistances—but my brother was dead. Hearing the sobbing and lamentations of my parents, the populace surrounded the house. I know not who the fanatic was, that first imagined, my brother was a martyr, and that his family had strangled him to prevent his abjuration. Another added, that abjuration was to be made tomorrow. A third said, the Protestant religion enjoins fathers and mothers to cut the throats, or strangle their children, when they discover an inclination to become Catholics. And a fourth said, that nothing could be more true; that the Protestants, in their last assembly, had nominated an executioner of their sect; that young Lavaisse, at the age of nineteen or twenty, was that executioner; that the young man, who was candour and meekness itself, had travelled express from Bourdeaux to Toulouse, to hang his friend. Behold, a striking view of a populace! and too faithful a picture of its extravagancies!

These rumours passed from mouth to mouth. Those who had heard the cries of my brother Peter, and of young Lavaisse, and the groans of my father and mother, at a quarter before ten o'clock, did not hesitate to affirm, they had heard the cries of my brother while he was strangled, who had died two hours before.

To complete the misfortune, the capitoul, prepossessed by these clamours, came with his officers to the place, and ordered the body to be carried to the town-hall. The verbal process was entered upon, and drawn up in that hall, instead of the house where the body was found, though the latter be expressly enjoined by a law. Some of the evidences have said, that the verbal process actually made at the town-hall, was dated at the house where the body was found. This is one proof of that animosity which has destroyed my family. But of what consequence can it be, that a judge, in the first report, should have committed this fault? We do not pretend to accuse any one. It was not that irregularity, which proved fatal to us.

These first judges did not balance, as they ought to have done, between the probability of suicide, which indeed is rare in this country, and parricide, which is a thousand times more so; they determined for parricide. They supposed it, because it was pretended, that the deceased meant to change his religion. His papers and his books were searched for some proofs of this intention; but none could be found.

At last, a surgeon, called La Marque, was appointed to open the stomach of my brother, and to see whether there were any remains of his food. His account was, that the food must have been taken in four hours before his death. He was deceived; for it was but two hours. The man wanted to give himself the reputation of knowing the exact time requisite for digestion; which is different in different constitutions. Should this error of the surgeon have contributed any thing towards the punishment and death of my father? And is the life of man to depend on false reasoning?

There were no proofs against my parents; and there could have been none: recourse was had, therefore, to a monitory letter. I will not enquire whether the proceedings on such a letter are regular; for

crime is taken for granted; and the discovery of proofs is required. It was taken for granted, that Lavaisse had been called home from Bourdeaux, in order to act as executioner; and that the assembly held for electing him into that office, was on the day of his arrival, the 13th of October. It was imagined, that when a man was to be strangled, his executioners obliged him to fall on his knees, and evidence was sought to prove, that Mark Anthony Calas had been seen on his knees before his father, who had strangled him in the night, and in a place where there was no light.

All the people were sure, that my brother had died a Catholic; and proofs were in the same manner, required of his religion; though it was fully proved, that he had not quitted that of his family, and had not any inclination to do it. No doubt was entertained, of its being a maxim among Protestants, that a father should hang his son, when he entertained the least suspicion of his becoming a Catholic; and that opinion had so much credit, that the church of Geneva thought itself obliged to send an attestation of the abhorrence in which it held ideas so foolish and so abominable, and of its astonishment, that such a suspicion could have been entertained by the judges.

Before the monition was issued, the people had clamoured, that my brother, Mark Anthony, was to have entered into the fraternity of White Penitents, the day following that on which he died: the capitoul immediately ordered, that my brother should be pompously buried in the church of St. Stephen. Forty priests, and all the White Penitents, attended the funeral.

Four days afterwards, the White Penitents performed on his account a solemn service in their chapel; the church was lined with white; and a scaffold was erected, on which was placed a human skeleton, furnished by a surgeon, holding in one hand a paper,

on which were the words, "*abjuration of heresy, &c.*" and in the other, a palm, the emblem of martyrdom.

On the following day, the Franciscans performed a similar service. It may be supposed, that such ceremonies completely inflamed the minds of the people: the White Penitents and the Franciscans pronounced, without knowing it, the death of my father.

The parliament immediately took cognizance of this affair. They first annulled the proceedings of the capitouls, which being defective in all the forms, could not have availed. But the prejudice, which had been excited, subsisted in all its force. All the zealots were ready to depose; one, that he had, in the obscurity of the night, and through the key-hole, seen people running; another, from a house, at the other extremity of the street, had heard the voice of Calas, who complained of being strangled.

A painter, called Mattei, said, his wife had told him, that a person, called Mandrille, had told her, that some person, unknown, had told him, he had heard the cries of Mark Anthony Calas from the other extremity of the city.

As to the persons accused, my father, my mother, my brother Peter, the young Lavaisse, and the servant, they agreed unanimously on all the essential points. All confined and in irons; all separately interrogated, they maintained the truth; without ever varying, either when they were repeatedly examined afunder, or when they were confronted to each other.

The dreadful affliction, in which they were plunged, might affect their memories as to some little circumstances, which they had observed only with distracted and weeping eyes; but neither of them hesitated a moment, on any thing which could affect their innocence. The cries of the multitude; the ignorant deposition of the surgeon La Marque; witnesses, who gave evidence only of what they had heard; and who, having once uttered absurd accu-

sations, would not contradict them, prevailed against the most evident truth.

The judges had before them, on one hand, frivolous accusations, and on the other, the absolute impossibility, that my father, at the age of sixty-eight, could hang a young man of twenty-eight, much more robust than himself. They allowed, that it must have been difficult to commit this crime; but they pretended it was much more difficult, for my brother, Mark Anthony Calas, to put an end to his own life.

It was in vain, that the young Lavaisse, and the servant, proved the innocence of my father, my mother, and my brother Peter. Lavaisse, and the servant, were themselves accused. The assistance of witnesses so necessary, was taken from us contrary to the spirit of all the laws.

It was evident, and all the world allowed it, if Mark Anthony Calas was assassinated, it must have been by all the family, and by Lavaisse, and the servant; that they were all innocent, or all guilty; for it was proved, that they had quitted each other during supper or afterwards.

I know not by what fatality the judges were induced to believe my father criminal; and how forms could supersede truth. I have been assured, that many of them maintained the innocence of my father for some time, and that they gave way at last to a majority. That majority believed all my family, and the young Lavaisse, equally culpable. It is certain they condemned my unhappy father to be broken on the wheel, with the persuasion that he would not be able to resist his torments, and that, in the horror of his punishment, he would confess the pretended associates of his crime.

I have already said, and I cannot too often repeat it, they were astonished at seeing my father die, calling God, before whom he was going to appear, to witness his innocence. If the public voice has not

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deceived me, the two Dominicans, called Bourges and Caldagues, who were allowed to assist him in the cruel moments of his punishment, have given their testimony to his resignation; they saw him pardoning his judges and pitying them; and they wished they might die with sentiments of piety so truly affecting.

The judges were soon obliged to enlarge my mother, young Lavaisse, and the servant; they banished my brother; and I, as well as the public, could not help asking, Why banish him, if he is innocent? and why not punish him with greater severity, if he is guilty?

I have always wondered, why, having ordered him to be conducted out of the city by one gate, they should permit, nay, oblige him immediately to return by another? Why should he have been confined three months in a convent of the Dominicans? Was the purpose to convert and not to banish him? Did they stipulate his change as the price of his recall? Have they the power of punishing or of pardoning at pleasure? And was the dreadful punishment of his father to be the means of his conviction?

After this horrible catastrophe, my mother had the resolution to abandon her fortune and effects; went to Paris, without any other aid than her virtue, to implore the justice of the king. She hoped, that the king's council would fully examine into the proceedings at Toulouse. It is to be supposed, that the judges, touched by the spirited conduct of my mother, saw evidently, what they had before suspected, the innocence of my father. How was it possible to imagine, that a woman, without protection and support, would dare to petition for a revival of a judicial process, if her husband had been criminal? Would she have travelled three hundred leagues to seek a death, which she deserved? That was altogether as impossible as the crime with which my father was accused. For I say it again, though with

horror, if my father was guilty of the murder; my mother, and my brother Peter were so likewise; and Lavaisse, and the servant, must have assisted in the crime. Would my mother have undertaken this journey, to expose all of them to punishment, and especially to expose herself?

I declare, that my sentiments and resolution are the same with hers. I would freely submit to die with her, if my father has committed the crime, against God, nature, the state and religion, which has been imputed to him.

I unite my fate with that of my virtuous mother, by this act; which, whether legal or not, is public, and signed by me. The advocates, who may undertake her defence, will expose the proceedings as null; and it will be proper, they should shew that Lavaisse and the servant, though accused, were necessary witnesses, who would have deposed strongly in favour of my father. They will properly state the necessity to which the judges were reduced, of supposing, that a man of the age of sixty-eight, who was infirm in his legs, should, without assistance, have hanged his own son, a most robust young man. An execution absolutely impossible. They will place in one scale this physical impossibility, and in the other, the rumors of the populace. They will weigh probabilities, and allot its proper credit to the testimony of witnesses, who deposed only what they had heard.

What will be said, when it is known, that we have been three months trying to procure the minutes of the process at Toulouse, and have been often refused? The public, as well as the council, will be affected with indignation and pity, when they learn, that an attorney has demanded of us, a family reduced to indigence, a hundred louis d'or for assisting us in an irregular manner, to get a copy of the process?

I do not ask pardon of the judges, for exclaiming against their sentence. They will certainly at-

tribute it to filial piety. They would despise me if I acted otherwise. And, perhaps, some of them may even drop a tear on my memorial.

This horrible transaction cannot fail of interesting all religions and all nations. It is of importance to the state, to know on what side lies the most dangerous fanaticism. I tremble, while I only think on the subject; and more than one reader of sensibility will tremble with me.

Alone, as in a desert, without council, without support, without consolation, I address myself to the chancellor and the whole council of state. "The petition, which I lay at your feet, is extrajudicial, render it otherwise by your authority and your justice. Do not compassionate my family, but bring the truth to light. Let the parliament of Toulouse boldly produce the minutes of their proceedings; all Europe demands it. If they do not, they will see, that all Europe will decide on their conduct."

Cbatelaine, July 22, 1762.

Signed,

DONATUS CALAS.

Declaration of Peter Calas.

ON my arrival at the house of my brother Donatus Calas, in order to lament and weep with him, I found in his hands, the memorial which he had just finished, to justify our unhappy family. I readily join my mother and him; I attest the truth of all he has written; I ratify all my mother hath said; and become courageous by her example; I require to be put to death with her, if my father has been criminal.

I swear, and I pledge myself to swear judicially, to the truth of the following narration.

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Young Gobe Lavaisse, a youth at the age of nineteen or twenty; of manners the most gentle and humane; brought up virtuously by his father, a celebrated advocate; was the friend of Mark Anthony my brother; who was a man of letters, and had also studied, in order to become an advocate. Lavaisse, as it has been already said, supped at our house on the 13th of October, 1761. I had slept a little after supper, when Mr. Lavaisse took his leave. My mother awaked me; and desired I would take a candle, and light our friend.

My dreadful surprise may be conceived, when I saw my brother in his shirt, and hanging to the double door, which leads into the warehouse. I uttered frightful exclamations and cries. I called my father; and he came down in the utmost consternation. He took the body in his arms, and the stick which he had laid from one leaf of the door to the other, slipped down. He loosened the knot, and drew off the cord. He trembled; he wept; he cried out, while performing the melancholy offices—"Go," he said to me; "go, in God's name, and bring Camoïre, the surgeon; perhaps, my poor child may not be intirely dead."

I flew to the house of the surgeon; but I found only his apprentice, whose name is Gorse, whom I brought with me. My father stood between my mother, and one of our neighbours, called Despèche, son to a Catholic merchant, who wept with them. My mother tried in vain to make my brother swallow some distilled waters; and rubbed his temples. Gorse, the surgeon, felt his pulse and his heart; and found him dead and cold. He took off what he wore about his neck, which was of black Taffetas; he saw the impression of the cord; and pronounced that he was strangled.

His shirt was a littled ruffled; his hair was put up as usual; and his clothes were folded up on the counter. I ran out, in order to get some advice any where,

where. My father, in the excess of his grief, said to me, "Do not go, and spread the report, that thy brother has put an end to himself; save, as much as possible, the reputation of thy miserable family." I went, deprived of my senses, to the house of Mr. Caseing, a friend to our family, who lived at the Exchange. I brought him to the house. He advised us immediately to inform the officers of justice. I ran to the house of Clausade, a lawyer. Lavaisse went first to that of the register, to the capitoul's, and then to that of the principal judge, whose name is Monier. I hastened back to my father, while Lavaisse and Clausade got up the judge, who was gone to-bed; and afterwards went to the capitoul himself.

The capitoul had set out for our house, in consequence of the public rumour. He entered with forty soldiers. I was below to receive him; and he ordered me to be secured. At that instant, the judge arrived with Lavaisse and Clausade. The guards were not disposed to suffer Lavaisse to enter the house, and pushed him back. It was not till after he had made some noise, by insisting on coming in, and saying he had supped with the family, that he obtained leave of the capitoul to enter the house.

Every man, who has the least knowledge of the human heart, will perceive in all these steps, the strongest marks of our innocence. How was it possible to have suspected it! Is there an example, in the annals of the world and of its crimes, of such an action committed without design, without interest, and without cause?

The capitoul had commanded the attendance of La Tour, a physician, and of the surgeons La Marque and Peronet. They examined the body in my presence; and sought out marks of mortal violence, but found none. They took no notice of the cord. And they gave in their report to the capitoul in secret; after which we were all conducted to the town-

town-hall; i. e. my father, my mother, Lavaisse, Caseing, the servant, and me: the body, and its clothes, were also carried to the town-hall.

I wished to leave a lighted candle in the passage below, that we might have light at our return. Such was my security, and that of my father, we thought that we were only to be led to the town-hall to give our evidence to the truth, and that we should return to sleep at home. But the capitoul, smiling at my simplicity, ordered the candle to be put out; saying, "You will not return so soon." My father and I were put into a dark dungeon; my mother, Lavaisse, and Caseing, into dungeons, which had a little light. The verbal testimonies of the capitoul, the physician, and the surgeons, were taken the next morning at the town-hall.

Caseing, who had not supped with us, was very soon enlarged. We were all sentenced to the torture, and put in irons on the 18th of November. We appealed to the parliament, which annulled the sentence of the capitoul, irregular in many points; and continued the proceedings.

I was interrogated above fifty times. I was asked, whether my brother, Mark Anthony, was to have embraced the Catholic religion? I answered, I was sure of the contrary; but, being a man of letters, and a lover of music, he went sometimes to church, to hear those preachers whom he thought eloquent, and any music which was deemed good. And, in God's name, of what consequence could it have been to me, that my brother, Mark Anthony, was a Catholic or a Protestant? Have I lived in less harmony with my brother Louis, because he has gone to mass? Did I not often visit Catholics at Toulouse? Has any of them ever complained of my father or of me? Have I not learnt, in the celebrated injunction of the Bishop of Soissons, that we should treat even the Turks as our brethren? How should I think,

think, therefore, of treating my brother as a wild beast? What an idea! What madness!

I was often confronted with my father; who, on seeing me, sobbed aloud, and melted into tears. The excess of his misfortunes, sometimes disturbed his memory. "Give me your assistance," he would say to me. And I often assisted him in the recollection of indifferent things. For example, it once escaped him, that we all left the table together. "My dear father," I said, "do you forget, that my brother went out of the room, sometime before us?" "Very true," said he—"I beg pardon; for I am overwhelmed with trouble."

I was confronted with above fifty witnesses. The hearts of my readers will be wrung with pity, when they learn who were the witnesses, and what were their testimonies.

A lace-maker's boy, named Popis, hearing from a neighbouring house the cries, which I uttered at the sight of my dead brother, imagined they were the cries of my brother himself. A maid servant, when I cried, "Oh, my God," imagined, I had cried thieves. They admitted things from report, which were had from report; and which consisted mostly of such ridiculous mistakes.

A young lady, of the name of Peyronet, deposed, that she had seen me in the street on the 13th of October, at ten at night; running, with a handkerchief at my eyes, wiping my tears, and saying, that my brother was killed with a sword. I never said it; and if I had, I should not have been to blame, in endeavouring to save the honour of my brother. The judges should not have paid more attention to the false circumstances of this deposition, than to those which my grief and my tears proved to be true. Those tears were irrefragable testimonies, against all those frivolous accusations, by which the purest innocence has been sacrificed. It is possible, that my father, displeased that my elder brother
should

should lose his time and his money at billiards, might say, "If you do not alter your conduct, I will punish you; or I will turn you out; or you will be ruined; or you will come to perdition." But was it necessary, that a fanatic and impetuous witness should give an unnatural construction to those paternal words; and that he should wickedly turn, "If you do not change your conduct," into "If you do not change your religion?" And was it necessary, that the judges, having only the testimony of one man against a father accused of such a crime, should decide in favour of calumny, directly against nature?

There was not one witness against us, who deserved any credit; and on reading the verbal process, any man may imagine the difficulty we had in obtaining a copy of it from the register, who was enjoined to avoid any method by which it might be made public.

Every other circumstance occurred exactly as my mother, and my brother, Donatus Calas, have related them. There never was a case in which innocence was more clearly ascertained. Two priests attended my father during his last moments. One of them, who had come from Castres, said publicly, "He has died the death of the righteous." On what account then, it may be said, was your father condemned? You will hear; and you will be astonished.

The capitoul, M. Monier the judge, the king's attorney, and the king's advocate, some days after our imprisonment, took a person, in quality of jury, to the house where my brother, Mark Anthony, had been found dead. And who was this jury-man? It will hardly be believed, that he was the executioner. He was asked, whether a man could hang himself to the door-leaves of the warehouse door, where my father had been found by me? The wretch, who understood only his own operations, said the thing was impracticable. It was made a question

question of experimental philosophy. Alas! a man of the least knowledge must have seen, that the thing was not difficult to be done: and Lavoisier, who might have been interrogated with me, had actually seen a very evident proof.

The surgeon, La Marque, who had been called in to visit the corpse, might have been prejudiced against me; because, in one of his reports before the court, having mentioned the right eye for the left, I corrected his mistake. Thus, my father was sacrificed to ignorance as well as to prejudice. And though it was necessary, that the judges should have been unanimous, he was condemned only by a majority of them.

After the horrible execution, the judges obliged me to appear, and one of them said to me, "We have condemned your father; and if you do not confess, look to yourself." Great God! what had I to confess, more than that deluded men had shed innocent blood?

Some days afterwards, father Bourges, one of the priests, who had been appointed to attend my father, as the witnesses of his punishment and his sentiments, came to me in my dungeon, and menaced me with the same kind of death with that of my father, if I did not abjure my religion. Perhaps, in former times, and in those persecutions which are so exaggerated in the relation, a Roman proconsul, invested with arbitrary power, might have spoken in this manner. I confess, that I had the weakness to shrink at the apprehension of so dreadful a punishment.

At last, my sentence of banishment was announced to me; it had remained four days in the office of the court, without being signed. What irregularities! What uncertainties! The hands of the judges should have trembled at signing my sentence, after having signed that which condemned my father to death. The gaoler read to me, only two lines of mine.

As

As to the decree, or sentence, by which my virtuous father was condemned to the most dreadful punishment, I never saw it; it was never made public; and it is an impenetrable mystery. Those judgments are made for the public; they were formerly sent to the king; and never executed without his approbation. This is the custom, at the present time, in most parts of Europe. But in regard to the judgment pronounced on my father, as much care was taken, if I may so express myself, to withdraw it from the knowledge of men, as is usually taken by criminals to conceal their crimes.

My sentence surprised me, as it has all the world; for if my unhappy brother has been assassinated, it must have been by me and by Lavaisse, and not by a feeble old man. On me, therefore, the severest punishment should have been inflicted. Every man must see there was no medium between parricide and innocence.

I was immediately conducted to a gate of the city; an Abbé accompanied me, and obliged me to return to a Dominican convent; father Bourges waited for me at the door. He told me, that no notice would be taken of my sentence of banishment, if I would profess the Roman Catholic faith. He obliged me to continue four months in the monastery, where I was always guarded.

I have, however, escaped from that prison; but am ready to deliver myself up, whenever the king commands I should; and ready to shed my blood for the honour and reputation of my father and mother.

Blind prejudice destroyed us; reason pities us at this time; the public, which is the judge of honour and dishonour, will do justice to the memory of my father; and the council will confirm the decision of the public, if it should deign to peruse our memorials. This is not one of those proceedings,
which

which are buried in the dust of an office, because it is useless to publish them. I feel, that it must be of importance to mankind, that it should be informed by the minutest detail, of every thing which fanaticism has been able to produce; for fanaticism is among the most execrable pests of mankind.

Chatelaine, July 23, 1762.

Signed,

PETER CALAS.

THE HISTORY OF
ELIZABETH CANNING,
AND OF
JOHN CALAS.

History of Elizabeth Canning.

I WAS in London in the year 1753, when the adventures of Elizabeth Canning made so much noise. Elizabeth had quitted the house of her parents, and disappeared for a month; when she returned thin, emaciated, and her cloaths in rags—"Good God! in what condition are you returned! where have you been? whence are you come? what has befallen you?"—"Alas, my dear aunt, as I passed thro' Moorfields, in order to return home, two strong ruffians threw me down, robbed me, and carried me off to a house ten miles from London."

Her aunt and her neighbours wept at this tale. "Oh, my dear child! Was it not to the house of that infamous Mrs. Webb, that the ruffians conveyed you? For she lives about ten miles from town." "Yes, aunt,

" aunt, it was to Mrs. Webb's." " To a great house
" on the right?" " Yes, aunt." The neighbours
then described Mrs. Webb; and the young Canning
agreed, that she was exactly such a woman as they
described her. One of them told Miss Canning, that
people played all night in that woman's house; that
it was a cut-throat place, where young men resorted
to lose their money and ruin themselves. " Indeed
" it is a cut-throat place," replied Elizabeth Can-
ning. " They do worse," said another neighbour,
" those two ruffians, who are cousins to Mrs.
" Webb, go on the high-way, take up all the pret-
" ty girls they meet, and oblige them to live on
" bread and water until they consent to abandon
" themselves to the gamblers in the house." " Good
" God! I suppose they obliged you, my dear niece,
" to live upon bread and water?" " Yes, aunt."
She was asked, whether the ruffians had not offered
violence to her chastity; and whether she had not
prostituted herself? She answered; That she had
resisted them; that they beat her to the ground, and
put her life in danger. Then the aunt and the
neighbours began to cry out and weep.

They conducted the little girl to the house of one
Adamson, who had been long a friend of the family;
he was a man of fortune, and of great consequence
in the parish. He mounted his horse, and took
with him some friends, as zealous as himself, to re-
connoitre the house of Mrs. Webb. On viewing
the house, they thought there could be no doubt of
the girl's having been confined there; and on per-
ceiving an out-house where there was some hay, they
concluded that to have been the place of her con-
finement. The pity of the good man Adamson was
engaged; he described the place on his return, which
Elizabeth acknowledged she had been confined in.
He interested the whole neighbourhood in her be-
half, where a subscription was set on foot, in favor
of a young woman so cruelly treated.

In proportion as Canning recovered her appearance and beauty, the people grew warm in her interest. Mr. Adamson presented a formal complaint to the sheriff in behalf of injured innocence. Mrs. Webb, and all those who lived in her house, while tranquil and unapprehensive in the country, were arrested and thrown into a dungeon.

The sheriff, in order to be the better informed of the truth of this transaction, commenced his proceedings by inticing amicably to him a young woman who was a servant to Mrs. Webb, and engaging her by gentle words to say all that she knew. The servant, who had never seen or heard of Miss Canning, answered ingenuously at first, that she knew nothing of the person he spoke of. But when the sheriff told her, she must answer in a court, and that she would certainly be hanged if she did not confess; she said every thing he wished her to say. In short, a jury was assembled, and nine persons were condemned to be hanged.

Happily in England, no process can be conducted in secret; because the punishment of crimes is designed to furnish lessons of public instruction, and not opportunities of private vengeance. All interrogatories are made in public courts, and all trials of any consequence are printed. Besides, in England they have preserved an ancient law, once in force in France, which enjoins, that no criminal be executed without giving the king previous information of the cause, and without having his sentence signed by the king. That law, so wise, so humane, so necessary, is sunk into disuse and oblivion in France, which unfortunately has been the case of many other laws: but it is observed in almost all Europe; it is in Russia; and it is in China, that ancient land of morals, where divine laws were published before Europe could be said to have customs.

The time drew near in which the nine persons accused were to be executed, when the paper, called the

the Session-Paper, fell into the hands of a philosopher, called Ramsay. He read the account of the trial, and found the whole of it absurd. He was moved with indignation, and sat down to write a pamphlet, in which he stated it as a principle, that it is the first obligation of a jurymen to be possessed of common-sense. He shewed, that Mrs. Webb, her two cousins, and the rest of the family, must have been different from the rest of mankind, if they obliged young girls to fast on bread and water with a view to prostitute them; for, on the contrary, they should have dieted and dressed them well, in order to render them agreeable; because, in all cases, merchants who have goods to dispose of, take care not to injure or tear them. He shewed, that Miss Canning had never been at the house of Mrs. Webb, and that she had only repeated the foolish things which her aunt had suggested to her, and that the good Mr. Adamson had, by the excess of his zeal, occasioned this extravagant prosecution: in short, that in all probability, the lives of nine of his majesty's subjects would be sacrificed, because Miss Canning was handsome and would tell falsehoods.

The servant who had been induced in an amicable manner to say before the sheriff what was not true, could not safely contradict herself before the court. A person, who has given false testimony through passion or fear, commonly adheres to what he has said, and lies, from fear of passing for a liar.

It is in vain, said Mr. Ramsay, the law has ordained that two witnesses should be sufficient to prove a capital crime, and to take away the life of a citizen. If the lord chancellor and the archbishop of Canterbury should swear they have seen me assassinate my father and mother, and in half an hour eat them all for my breakfast, the chancellor and the archbishop should be put in Bedlam, rather than I should be burnt upon their evidence. If on the one hand a thing be impossible and absurd, and on the

other there be ten thousand witnesses and a thousand reasoners; the impossibility of the thing should determine it against the evidences and reasonings.

This little pamphlet opened the eyes of the sheriff and the jury. They were obliged to revise the proceedings. It was alledged, that Miss Canning was a little impostor, who had retired to lie in, while she pretended to have been in prison at Mrs. Webb's; and all the city of London, which had espoused her cause, was as much ashamed, as it had been when a wag proposed to jump into a quart bottle, brought two thousand people to see the spectacle, carried off their money, and left them the bottle.

N. B. *It is possible, that we may have been misinformed on some circumstances of this event; but the principal are true, and well known in England.*

History of John Calas.

THE ridiculous adventure above related would have ended very tragically, if a philosopher had not accidentally read of it in the public papers. Would to God, that in a process not less ridiculous, and a thousand times more horrible, the white penitents of Toulouse had also furnished one philosopher! We should not at this time have groaned over the innocent blood which prejudice hath shed.* There was, however, at Toulouse, one wise man, who directed his voice against the clamors of a mad populace, and against the prejudices of obstinate magistrates. That wise man, who cannot be too much commended and blessed, was M. De la Salle, a counsellor of parliament, who ought to be one of its judges.

* See the letter of the widow Calas, and the answer of her son Donatus Calas. See also the memorials presented in this affair.

He spoke his sentiments first on the irregularity of the monition. He loudly condemned the precipitation with which three solemn services were performed, on account of a man, who, in all probability should have been dragged through the dirt. He declared, that a person should not have been buried as a Catholic, and canonised as a martyr, who, in all probability, had put an end to his life, and who certainly was not a Catholic. It was known, that M. Chalier, advocate of Parliament, had deposed, that Mark-Anthony Calas (who was supposed to have had an intention of abjuring his religion the very day after that in which he was found dead) had on the contrary a design of going to Geneva, to propose himself as a preacher and pastor in the Protestant churches.

Mr. Caseing had in his possession a letter written by Mark-Anthony Calas, in which he speaks of his brother Louis, who was become a Catholic, as a deserter. *Our deserter*, says he, *plagues us*. The rector of St. Stephen's had declared, that Mark-Anthony Calas had been with him for a certificate; and that he would not be guilty of prevarication, in giving a certificate of being a Catholic to a person who was a Protestant.

M. De la Salle considered all these reasons. He added, that according to the intention of the statutes, and that of the Roman law observed in Languedoc, "there was no legal proof or presumption, which should induce a judge to regard the father as guilty of the death of his son; or balance that natural and sacred presumption, which sets parents above the suspicion of having murdered their children."

That worthy magistrate finding young Lavaisse and the Catholic servant could not be accused of the pretended murder of Mark-Anthony Calas, alledged they should have been admitted as witnesses, and that

the persons actually accused should not have been deprived of so necessary a testimony.

Having such strong reasons, and being justly affected by compassion, Mr. De la Salle spoke with that zeal which is the effect of persuasion and goodness of heart. One of the judges said to him, "Oh, Sir, you are wholly a Calas."—Mr. De la Salle replied, "Oh, Sir, you are wholly of the populace."

It is a melancholy thing to reflect, that the noble warmth which he shewed, served to injure the family whose defence he had undertaken; for having declared himself publicly, and with uncommon boldness, and being made a kind of party, he had the delicacy to withdraw himself; by that means, the family of Calas lost a liberal and well-informed judge, who probably would have had some influence on the others.

On the contrary, Mr. La Borde, who had declared himself for the prejudices of the populace, and who had shewn a zeal which he himself acknowledged to have been extravagant: Mr. La Borde, who had also renounced all concern in this business, and had retired to the country near Alby, returned, however, to condemn the father of a family to be broken alive upon the wheel.

There was not, as I have already said, and as I shall continue to say, any proof against this unfortunate family; the proceedings were founded on presumptions—and what presumptions! Human reason will blush at them.

The Sieur David, capitoul of Toulouse, had consulted the executioner, on the manner in which Mark-Anthony Calas might have hanged himself. It was the opinion of the executioner, which was the ground of the sentence, while the sentiments of all the advocates were neglected.

When the opinions of the judges came to be taken, the deliberation related wholly to the father; and the judge who reported the case of an innocent parent,

parent, gave his opinion in the following terms:
“ That he be condemned first to be tortured in the
“ ordinary and extraordinary manner, that he may
“ reveal his accomplices ; then be broken alive, and
“ made to expire on the wheel ; and after having
“ remained on it two hours, be burnt.”

This opinion was adopted by six judges ; three were for the torture only ; two were for clear proofs taken on the spot, whether Mark-Anthony Calas could have hanged himself, and one thought that John Calas should be discharged.

At last, after very long debates, the majority was found to be for the torture ordinary and extraordinary, and for having him broken alive on the wheel.

That unfortunate father of a family, who had never had a quarrel with any man, and who had never beaten one of his children ; that feeble old man, at the age of sixty-eight, was condemned to the most horrible punishment, for having strangled and hanged up with his trembling hands, and in hatred to the Catholic religion, a vigorous and robust son, who had never shewn a greater inclination for the Catholic religion than the father himself.

Interrogated as to his accomplices, in the horrors of the torture, he answered, “ *Alas ! where there is no crime, can there be accomplices ?* ”

When brought from the room in which he had been tortured to the place of execution, the same tranquility of mind appeared in him. All his fellow citizens, who saw him pass on the fatal cart, were affected ; even the populace, which by this time had recovered from its fanaticism, shed tears of sincere regret at his misfortunes. The officer who presided at the execution inflicted the last interrogatory, and obtained only the same answer. Father Bourges, a Dominican, who with father Caldagues, a religious of the same order, had been appointed to assist him in his last moments, and particularly to engage him not to conceal any part of the

truth, found him disposed only to offer up his life to God as a sacrifice for his sins. But in proportion as he testified his resignation to Providence, he was firm in defending his innocence, and that of the other persons accused.

A slight groan escaped him on receiving the first blow; all the other blows did not force from him the least complaint. When placed on the wheel, and waiting for the moment which would put an end to his punishment and his life, his conversation consisted wholly of Christian sentiments; he expressed no resentment against his judges; his charity even led him to say, he did not impute his death to them, for he supposed they had been deceived by false witnesses. And when he saw that the executioner was preparing to deliver him from his miseries, his last words to Father Bourges were these; "I die innocent. Jesus Christ, who was innocence
" itself, condescended to die by a punishment more
" cruel than mine. I do not regret a life, the termination of which will, I hope, conduct me to
" eternal happiness. I lament the state of my wife
" and my son; and that poor stranger, the son of
" Mr. Lavoisier, to whom I meant civility, when I
" invited him to sup at my house—the thoughts of
" him increase my sorrow." He spoke thus, when the capitoul, the principal author of this scene, who would be a spectator of his punishment and his death, though his office did not put him under that necessity, approached him and said, "Wretch, behold
" the pile on which thy body will be reduced to
" ashes! tell the truth." The Sieur Calas made no answer, but by turning his head; and at the same instant the executioner did his office, and put an end to his life.

Although John Calas died a Protestant, Father Bourges and Father Caldagues, who assisted him, pronounce the strongest eulogiums on his memory. It was thus, they said to any persons who were desirous

sirous to hear them on the subject; it was thus our ancient martyrs died; and even on a rumour, that the Sieur Calas had contradicted himself, and confessed his pretended crime, Father Bourges thought it his duty to go to the judges, to give them an account of the last sentiments of John Calas, and to assure them he had always protested his innocence, as well as that of the other persons accused.

After that strange execution, the magistrates proceeded against Peter Calas the son, for he was regarded as the most culpable of those who were living, and for the following reason.

A young man, called Cazeres, and born of parents among the common people, had been brought from Montpellier while this business was depending, in order to give evidence. He swore, that while an apprentice to a taylor named Bou, who had a shop adjoining to the house of John Calas, his son Peter came into the shop. The taylor's wife, hearing the bell toll for the benediction, ordered the boys to go and receive it. On which, Peter Calas said to her, "You think only of your benedictions; we may be saved either by the Protestant or the Catholic religion. Two of my brothers are of my opinion. If I thought they had a disposition to change, I would willingly stab them; and if I had been in the situation of my father, when Louis Calas my other brother turned Catholic, I should not have spared him."

Why affect to bring a witness from Montpellier to attest a fact, which the witness pretends had happened in the presence of the taylor's wife, and two of his boys, who were still at Toulouse? Why were not the wife of Bou and the two boys examined? Especially, after it had been asserted in the memorials of the Calas family, that they strenuously maintained all the testimony of Cazeres to be a falsehood, dictated by the enemies of that unhappy family, and by the rage of party? How! was it possible that

Cazeres

Cazeres should have heard what was publicly said to his master and mistress, and that they, and those who were with them, should not have heard it! And the judges gave him credit; while they refused all attention to the taylor's family!

Every man must see, that the deposition of the wretch was a contradiction in terms. *Men may be saved in either religion*; i. e. God will pity human ignorance and weakness; but I will not pity my brother! God accepts the sincere vows of those who apply to him; but I will put to death any man who will pray to God in a manner which is not agreeable to me! Can any sentiments be imagined of more atrocious folly?

Another witness, though a less important one, who swore that Peter Calas had spoken ill of the Roman religion, began with saying, "I have an invincible aversion to all Protestants." This must have been a witness very deserving of credit!

These things were all which could be collected against Peter Calas. The leading judge thought there were sufficient proofs of his guilt, to justify his being condemned to the galleys: but he was not followed in his opinion. Some were for discharging Peter; others for banishing him; the principal judge adopted this opinion, which became the general one.

When they came to consider the case of that virtuous and affectionate mother, the widow Calas, there was no kind of proof or presumption against her; the first judge, however, was for sentencing her to banishment. The other judges were of opinion, that all proceedings against her should be dropt, and that she should be discharged.

The conduct of young Lavaisse was considered in its turn. The suspicions concerning him were absurd. How could it be supposed, that a youth at the age of nineteen, who was at Bourdeaux, should have been elected at Toulouse, to the office of Protestant executioner! Or that a mother should have
said

said to him, "You arrive very seasonably. We are
" come to the resolution to have our eldest son exe-
" cuted; you are his friend; and you will sup with
" us that you may hang him. A friend of ours was
" to have supped with us, and he would have assist-
" ed; but we shall do very well without him."

Such extreme frenzy could not long continue. The principal judge, however, was of opinion, that Lavaisse should be banished; all the other judges, except Darboud, opposed the opinion. But when the case of the servant came before the court, the principal judge thought she should be enlarged, from a prejudice in favour of her Catholicism, and his determination passed unanimously.

Is it possible, that the judges of Toulouse should not at this time weep over the innocence of a family thus treated? They weep, without doubt, and they blush: nay, they have furnished one proof that they repent of their cruel sentence; they have refused for two months to communicate to those who wished to have them, the minutes of the process and the sentence.

Each of them now says in his heart, "I see with
" horror all those prejudices, all those suppositions,
" which shock nature and common sense. I see that
" by one sentence, I have been the means of putting
" to death an old man, who could not have been
" guilty; and that by another, I have assisted in
" discharging those who must have been criminal
" like him, if his crime had been possible. I per-
" ceive most clearly, that one of those sentences
" must contradict the other. I confess, that if I
" have been instrumental in putting the father to
" death, I should not have stooped at the banishment
" of the son: but I must acknowledge, that I re-
" proach myself both with the banishment of the
" son and the dreadful death of the father, as well
" as with having loaded with irons for six months
" the

“ the young Lavaisse, and a mother respectable for
 “ her virtues.

“ If we seem unwilling to shew the minutes of our
 “ proceedings to those who wish to be acquainted
 “ with them, it is because they have been effaced
 “ by our tears. Let us add to those tears the repara-
 “ tion due to an honest family, which we have
 “ precipitated into desolation and indigence, I will
 “ not say to dishonour, for dishonour is not the lot
 “ of innocence; and let us restore to the mother,
 “ the effects of which this abominable process has
 “ deprived her. I will add, let us ask forgiveness
 “ of her; but who among us could support her pre-
 “ sence?

“ Let us, at least, receive the public remon-
 “ strances, which are the lamentable fruits of public
 “ injustice. We apply to the throne, when it re-
 “ quires such assistances of the people as are neces-
 “ sary to save them from the sword of an enemy:
 “ we are, therefore, not to be surprised, that the
 “ whole world remonstrate, when we have put to
 “ death the most inoffensive and innocent of men.
 “ These remonstrances are written with his blood!”

It must be supposed, that the judges have often
 made these reflections in secret; it would be to their
 honour to indulge them! and they will be to be
 pitied, if false shame should stifle them in their
 hearts.

N. B. *This account was written by a person who
 was at Toulouse, and was a witness to the transactions,
 but had no connection or correspondence with the family
 of Calas. He has interposed only because he loves equi-
 ty, and is an enemy to fanaticism.*

L E T.

L E T T E R

From Mr. De V— to Mr. D—.

March 1, 1765.

My dear friend,

I HAVE devoured the memorial just published by Mr. De Beaumont, on the innocence of Calas. I have admired, and I have shed tears over it; but it has not given me any information. I have been long convinced; and I had the happiness to furnish the first proof of the innocence of the family.

You wish to know, how the general clamour of Europe against the judicial murder of the unhappy Calas, broken on the wheel at Toulouse, should have originated in a little unknown corner of the earth, between the Alps and Mount Jura, a hundred leagues from the theatre on which this horrible scene was presented.

Nothing, perhaps, can more clearly discover the insensible chain by which all the events of this miserable world are linked.

About the end of March, 1762, a traveller who had passed through Languedoc, and who visited my retreat, which is at the distance of two leagues from Geneva, gave me an account of the dreadful punishment of John Calas, and assured me, he was innocent. I replied, that his crime was not very probable: but that it was still less probable, that the judges should, without having any interest, condemn an innocent man to be broken alive on the wheel.

I was told the next day, that one of the children of this unhappy father had taken refuge in Switzerland, not far from my retreat. His flight induced me to suspect that his family was guilty. I reflected,
how-

however, that the father had been condemned to punishment, for having himself, and without assistance, assassinated his son, on account of religion; and that he was put to death at the age of sixty-nine. I could not recollect having ever read of any old man who had been possessed of such horrible fanaticism. I had always observed, that the rage of anaticism generally seized young people, whose ardent, tumultuous and feeble imaginations were inflamed by superstition. The fanatics of Cevennes were fools of twenty-three, trained to prophesying from infancy. Almost all the Convulsionists with which Paris abounded when I was there, were little girls and young boys. Old persons among the monks, are less frantic, less susceptible of the fury of zeal, than the youth who have just passed their noviciate. Those celebrated assassins whom fanaticism has armed, have always been young people. Those who have pretended to be possessed have also been youth. We have never seen an old man exorcised. That idea made me doubt a crime, which besides was hardly possible in nature. I was then ignorant of the circumstances attending this matter.

I sent to desire the young Calas to come to my house. I expected to have found in him an enthusiast or demoniac, such as the province from which he came sometimes produced. I saw a simple, ingenuous youth, with the sweetest, most interesting countenance, and who in speaking endeavoured in vain to suppress his tears. He told me, that he was at Nismes, where he had been bound an apprentice to a manufacturer, when public report informed him, that all his family at Toulouse was on the point of being condemned to death; that almost all Languedoc believed them guilty, and that to withdraw himself from so dreadful an infamy, he had fled into Switzerland.

I asked him, if his father and mother were of a violent character. He told me, they had never punished any of their children by blows, and that no parents could be more indulgent or more tender.

I acknowledge, that nothing more was requisite to induce me to presume, that the family was innocent. I had further informations from two merchants of Geneva, men of undoubted probity, who had lodged in the house of Calas at Toulouse. They confirmed me in my opinion. So far from thinking the family of Calas fanatical and capable of parricide, I saw that it was the fanaticism of others which had accused and ruined them. I had long known what calumny and the spirit of party were capable of.

But what was my astonishment, when, on having written to Languedoc, concerning that strange transaction, Catholics and Protestants answered, that there could be no doubt of the crime of John Calas. I was not discouraged. I took the liberty of writing to those who had governed the province, to commandants of neighbouring provinces, and to ministers of state; all were unanimous in their advice, that I would not interfere in so bad an affair. All the world condemned me, and I persisted. I took the following measures.

To compleat the misfortunes of the widow Calas, and in order to offer her the last outrage, her daughters were forced from her. She retired to a solitude, where she indulged her sorrow and her tears, and where she waited for her dissolution. I did not concern myself whether she was attached to the Protestant religion or not; but only whether she believed in a God—the rewarder of virtue and the avenger of crimes. I had the question put to her, whether she would attest, in the name of that God, that her husband was innocent of the crime for which he was put to death? She did not hesitate. No more did I. I applied to Mr. Mariette, to deliver her defence to the king's council. It then became necessary to
draw

draw the widow Calas out of her retreat, and to induce her to undertake a journey to Paris.

It was then seen, that if the earth abounds with great crimes, there are also great virtues; and if superstition produces horrible misfortunes, philosophy repairs them.

A lady whose generosity is equal to the dignity of her birth, and who was then at Geneva to have her children inoculated, was the first who assisted that unfortunate family. Her example was followed by French families who had retired into that country. English travellers distinguished themselves on the occasion; and, as Mr. De Beaumont has well expressed it, there was a contest of generosity between the two nations, which should afford the best succour to virtue so cruelly oppressed.

What followed—who can know better than yourself? Who has assisted and served the innocent with a zeal more constant or more intrepid? What have you not done to encourage that eloquence which has been attentively heard by all France, and even by all Europe. We have seen the return of that time in which Cicero justified Amerinus, accused of parricide, before an assembly of legislators. Some persons who are called Devotees, opposed every thing in favor of the family of Calas: but, for the first time since the establishment of fanaticism, the voice of wisdom put them to silence.

Reason, therefore, has obtained advantageous victories among us! But would you believe, my dear friend? So effectually assisted, so well avenged, it was not the only one which religion accused of parricide; it was not the only one sacrificed to the fury of prejudice? There is another still more unfortunate, because having been plunged into the same horrors, they have not had the same consolations; they have not found a Mariette, a De Beaumont, a L'Oiseau.

It seems, as if there were in Languedoc, an infernal fury formerly brought into the province by those

those inquisitors who were in the *suite* of Simon de Montfort; and which is now and then shaking its infernal torch.

A vassal of the Lordship of Castre, called Sirven, had three daughters. As the religion of the family was that which is pretended to be reformed, the youngest of those daughters was taken away from the arms of her mother, and placed in a convent, where she was well whipped, in order the better to learn her catechism. She became stupid, and threw herself into a well, about a league from her father's house. The religious zealots no sooner heard of this, than they concluded that the father, the mother, and the sisters, had drowned the child. It passed for certain truth among the Catholics of the province, that there was an important article of the Protestant religion, enjoining fathers and mothers to hang, cut the throats of, or drown all those of their children, whom they should suspect of any inclination to the Roman Catholic religion. It was precisely at the time when the scaffold of John Calas was erected, and when the whole family was in irons.

The adventure of the drowned girl, was soon known at Toulouse. "See another example," they said, "of a father and mother, who have murdered their child." The public fury was increased. Calas was broken on the wheel; and a writ was issued to secure Sirven, his wife, and his daughters. Sirven, thoroughly frightened, had but just time to fly with his sick family. They travelled on foot, destitute of every kind of assistance, over craggy mountains covered with snow. One of the daughters was delivered of a child among hills of ice, and dying herself, carried her dying infant in her arms. They took the road to Switzerland.

The same accident which led to me the children of Calas, brought also the family of Sirven. Imagine, my dear friend, four sheep, whom butchers have accused of having devoured a lamb. It was the picture

ture before me. It is impossible for me to paint to you so much innocence with so much misery. What was I to do? What would you have done in my place? Would it have been sufficient to sigh over the miseries of human nature? I took the liberty of writing to the first president of Languedoc, a virtuous and wise man; but he was not at Toulouse. By means of one of your friends, I presented a petition to the vice-chancellor. In the mean time, the father, mother, and two daughters, had been executed in effigy near Castres; their property was either confiscated or wasted, so that none remains for them.

Here we have a creditable, innocent, and virtuous family, delivered to dishonour and beggary among strangers. It is true, they are considered with pity. But it is very hard to be an object of pity through life. It has been said, that it cannot be difficult to obtain letters of pardon for them. I imagined, when I was thus spoken to, that their judges were meant, and that the letters were for them. You may easily believe, that the family would beg its bread from door to door, or expire in want, rather than apply for a pardon, which would imply a crime too horrible to be pardoned. And how are they to expect, or to obtain justice? Are they to deliver themselves up, to be imprisoned in a country where half the people still say the murder of Calas was just? Are we to appeal to the council a second time? Shall we attempt to excite the public pity, which the misfortune of Calas may have exhausted; when the public may be weary of having accusations of parricide to refute; convicts to reinstate; and judges to reproach and put to shame?

These two tragical events, which have in so little time succeeded each other, are they not, my friend, proofs of that inevitable fatality, to which our miserable species is subjected? This is a terrific truth, strongly urged by Homer and by Sophocles; but it is useful, since it teaches us resignation, and instructs us how to suffer.

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I can hardly relate to you, that while the astonishing disasters of Calas and Sirven afflicted my poor frame, a man, whose profession you will discover by his discourse, reproached me with the interest I took in two families, which were utter strangers to me. "Wherefore should you interfere?" he said to me—"Let the dead bury the dead." I answered, "I have found, in my desert, the Israelite bathed in his blood; permit me to pour a little wine and oil over his wounds. You are a Levite; let me be the Samaritan."

It is true, that in recompence of my pains, I have been treated, as if I were a Samaritan. A defamatory libel has been published, under the title of the Pastoral Mandate and Instruction. But I think it my duty to forget—it was a Jesuit who composed it. Can I give a better proof, that we ought to regard our enemies as our brethren?

Your passions are, love of truth, humanity, and hatred of calumny. The conformity of our characters has produced our friendship. I have spent my life in seeking and publishing that truth which I love. Who besides, among modern historians, has been at the pains to defend the memory of a great prince, against the atrocious impostures of a writer, who may be called the calumniator of kings, ministers, and great generals, and who at this time has no readers?

I have, therefore, in the horrible misfortunes of Calas and Sirven, only done what all men do. I have followed my inclination. It is the inclination of a philosopher, not to bemoan the unhappy, but to serve them.

I know with what fury, fanaticism sets itself against philosophy. Philosophy has two daughters, which Fanaticism would willingly serve as she has done Calas and Sirven; those are *Truth* and *Toleration*; while Philosophy is only desirous of disarming those children of Fanaticism, *Calumny* and *Persecution*.

Persons not accustomed to reason, are desirous of discrediting those who are. They have confounded the philosopher with the sophist; but they have deceived themselves. True philosophy may sometimes be provoked at the calumny which pursues it. She may cover with eternal contempt, the vile mercenary, who twice in a month commits outrages on reason, good taste, and virtue. He may now and then hold up to ridicule, those who insult literature in the sanctuary where it should be honoured. But he never enters into cabals; into dark and secret practices; or into designs of vengeance. He studies, like the sage of De Monthart, or the sage of De Voré, to render the ground more fertile, and the inhabitants more happy. The true philosopher clears uncultivated fields, augments the number of ploughs, and consequently of inhabitants; occupies and enriches the poor; encourages marriage; establishes the orphan: he does not murmur at necessary imposts, and puts the labourer into a condition to pay them with cheerfulness. He expects nothing from men; and yet does them all the good of which he is capable. He has a horror of the hypocrite; but pities the superstitious. In short, he is capable of being a friend.

I perceive, that I have been drawing your portrait; and that nothing would be wanting to it, if you were happy enough to reside in the country.

A Caution to the Public, on the Murders imputed to Calas and to Sirven.

WE have had in France two accusations in one year, of assassination on account of religion; and two families have been judicially sacrificed by fanaticism. The same prejudice which broke Calas on the wheel at Toulouse, would have dragged to the gallows the whole family of Sir-

Sirven, in a jurisdiction of the same province. And the same friend of innocence, Mr. Elie de Beaumont, an advocate of parliament, who had justified Calas, appeared in defence of Sirven, whom he also justified in a memorial signed by several advocates; a memorial, which proves the judgment against Sirven, still more absurd than that against Calas.

The following, in a few words, is the fact; an account of which may be acceptable to strangers, who may not have had an opportunity of perusing the memorial of the eloquent Mr. de Beaumont.

In 1761, while the family of Calas was in irons, accused of having assassinated Mark Anthony Calas, who was supposed to have been inclined to embrace the Roman Catholic religion, it happened, that a daughter of Paul Sirven, land-surveyor in the district of Castres, was brought to the Bishop of Castres, by a woman who superintended his house. The bishop understanding, that the girl was of a Calvinist family, ordered her to be shut up in a kind of convent, which they call *Maison des regentes*. The girl was disciplined with so much severity, in order to be instructed in the Roman Catholic religion, that she lost her senses, got out of her prison, and sometime afterwards, threw herself into a well, in the open country, at some distance from the house of her father, and near a village called Mazamet. The magistrate of the village reasoned in the following manner. "At Toulouse, they mean to break John Calas alive on the wheel, and to burn his wife, who, no doubt, have hanged their son, lest he should go to mass. I ought, therefore, in imitation of my superiors, to do the same by the Sirvens, who, without doubt, have drowned the little girl, on the same account. It is true, I have no proof, that the father, mother, and two sisters of this girl, have assassinated her. But I hear, there were no proofs against the family of Calas. I therefore run no risque. Perhaps, however, it may be too much for the judge of a village to burn or break on the wheel. I may at least

have the pleasure of hanging a whole Huguenot family. And I shall be paid my fees out of their forfeited goods”.

To proceed methodically and safely, that weak fanatic, caused the corpse to be visited by a physician, who was as learned in physic, as the judge was in jurisprudence. The physician, astonished at not finding the stomach of the girl filled with water, and not knowing that water could not enter where the air had no opportunity of escaping, concluded that the girl had been first suffocated, and then thrown into the well. A devotee of the neighbourhood averred, it was the custom of all Protestant families. At last, after many proceedings as irregular as those reasonings were absurd, the judge ordered the father, mother, and sisters of the deceased, to be taken into custody. On hearing this, Sirven assembled his friends. All were sure of his innocence; but the fate of Calas had filled the whole province with terror. They advised Sirven not to expose himself to the madness of fanaticism. He fled, accompanied with his wife and daughters, in a rigorous season. This wretched company were under a necessity of traversing on foot, mountains covered with ice. One of the daughters, who had been married about a year, was delivered of a child on the way, and among hills of ice; and in a dying condition herself, was obliged to carry her dying infant in her arms. And, when this wretched family had got into a place of safety, the first news they received was, that the father and mother had been condemned to death, and that the two daughters, judged equally guilty, were banished for ever; that their goods were confiscated; and that nothing remained for them in this world, but infamy and wretchedness.

This case may be seen at full length, with the clearest proofs of innocence on the one hand, and injustice on the other, in the masterly memorial of Mr. de Beaumont.

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Providence, which permitted that the first efforts, to produce the justification of Calas, should arise in those mountains and deserts which border on Switzerland, had also ordered, that the vengeance due to the injured Sirvens should originate in the same solitude. The children of Calas took refuge there; and the family of Sirven sought an asylum at the same time. Persons of real humanity and religion, who have had the consolation of serving these unfortunate families, and who were the first to respect them for their disasters and their virtues, could not then apply in favour of the Sirvens, as they did for the children of Calas; because the criminal process against the family of Sirven was carried on more slowly, and continued a longer time. Besides, how could a wandering family, four hundred miles from home, procure testimonies necessary to their justification? What could be done by the father overwhelmed with grief; the mother at the point of death; or the daughters, who were equally unfortunate? It became necessary to make a legal application for a copy of their proceedings; but forms prevented their obtaining it; forms which perhaps may be necessary, but which are often in their effects oppressive to the innocent and poor. Their relations intimidated, durst not write to them. All that could be known by that unfortunate family in a distant country, was, that it had been condemned to a capital punishment in its own. If it were known, what cares and pains became necessary to obtain any legal proofs in their favour, many persons would be astonished and discouraged.

It was not practicable to have recourse to the same forms of justice which had been used in the case of Calas; because Calas had been condemned by a parliament, and the family of Sirven by subordinate judges, from whose sentence there lay an appeal to that parliament.

We will not repeat here what has been said by the eloquent and generous Mr. de Beaumont: but having

considered how those transactions are connected with the interests of human nature, we are of opinion, it may be serviceable to that interest to correct at its origin, that fanaticism which produced them. The question regards only two obscure families; but when the most ignorant creature dies of a contagion which has long desolated the earth, it furnishes an intimation to the whole world, that the virulence of the poison subsists. All men should hold themselves on their guard; and *if there are any physicians*, they should seek those remedies which may remove the principles of an universal mortality.

It may be, that the forms of jurisprudence will not permit the petition of Sirven to be presented to the council of the king of France; but it will be received by the public; that judge of all judges has pronounced its sentence. It is to the public, therefore, we address ourselves; and it is to its judgment we submit our sentiments.

Examples of Fanaticism in general.

HUMAN nature has always been devoted to errors; but all those errors have not been of a bloody and cruel tendency. Men have long remained ignorant that the world moved round the sun; they have credited those, who have related their adventures with spirits; they have believed that birds announced future events; that serpents might be affected by charms and enchantments: that we can produce variegated animals by holding before the mothers objects of various colours: they have persuaded themselves, that in the wane of the moon, the marrow in bones is diminished; that the grain should become rotten, in order to grow, &c. &c. These follies have not produced persecutions, disorders, or murders.

But other frenzies have troubled the earth; other follies have covered it with blood. For example, it would

would be difficult to give any idea of the numbers which have been delivered up to the executioner by ignorant judges, who condemned them to the flames with great tranquility and without the least scruple, on an accusation of witchcraft. There has not been a tribunal of Europe, since the introduction of Christianity, which has not for fifteen centuries been often sullied by such judicial assassinations. And when I say, that among Christians, there have been more than a hundred thousand victims of that foolish and barbarous jurisprudence, and that most of them were women, and innocent young girls, I am very much within the bounds of truth.

Our libraries are filled with books on the laws of witchcraft. All the decisions of the judges in these cases are founded on the precedents afforded by the magicians of Pharoah, by the witch of Endor, by the demoniacs mentioned in the Gospel, and by the apostles who were sent expressly to cast out those devils who had taken possession of the bodies of men. No man dared to alledge, out of pure compassion to mankind, that God might formerly have permitted possessions and witchcraft, and not allow them at the present time. This distinction appeared criminal; and those who made it were sacrificed as victims. Christianity has ever been dishonoured by such barbarism. All the fathers of the church believed in magic, and more than fifty councils have solemnly pronounced anathemas on those, who, by a form of words, obliged the devil to enter the bodies of men. An universal error was sacred. Politicians, in whose power it was to deceive the people, were not men of attention and thought; they were always guided and forced by the torrent of public affairs. They feared the power of prejudice. They saw that fanaticism was born and cherished in the very bosom of religion. They dared not to strike the unnatural child, lest they should also wound the mother. They chose rather to run the risque of becoming themselves

selves the slaves of a popular error, than to encounter it.

Princes and kings have paid dearly for the fault of encouraging the superstition of the vulgar. Were not the people of Paris made to believe, that king Henry III. employed witchcraft in his devotions? And were not magical operations made use of for a long time to deprive him of a wretched life; which the knife of a Dominican put an end to, much more effectually than could have been done by invoking all the infernal regions?

Had not impostors formed the design of leading to Rome Martha Brosnier, a demoniac, to accuse Henry IV. in the name of the devil, of not being a good Catholic? Every year of the barbarous period we now refer to, was marked by such events. Did not all those, who adhered to the league of Paris, declare publicly that the beautiful Gabrielle d'Estree had died by the devil's twisting her neck?

We ought not, it is said, to produce at this time these circumstances so dishonourable to human nature. And I say, that we ought to speak of them a thousand times, and to render them ever present to the minds of men. It should be repeatedly told, that the unhappy priest, Urbain Grandier, was condemned to the flames by ignorant judges, after having been sold to a sanguinary minister. The innocence of Grandier was evident; but religious persons averred that he had bewitched them, and that was sufficient. Men spoke of the devil, until they had forgotten Almighty God. This must have been a necessary consequence, when the priest had made it an article of faith, that men had commerce with the devil. And the judges, regarding this pretended crime as equally real and equally common with robbery, there were found in Europe more witches than thieves.

A faulty

A faulty Jurisprudence, multiplies Crimes.

OUR magicians and witches were the effects of our rituals and jurisprudence ; founded on the decree of Gratian. The people said, " Our priests excommunicate and exorcise all those who enter into covenants with the devil ; our judges order them to be burnt : it is therefore very certain, that agreements may be entered into with the devil. Now if these agreements are made secretly, if Belzebub should be as good as his word, we may be abundantly enriched in one night. We need only be at the trouble of attending the midnight meetings of infernal spirits ; and the fear of being discovered should not prevail over the hope of those infinite advantages, which the devil may secure for us. Besides, Belzebub is more powerful than our judges, and can support us against them." Thus those wretches reasoned ; and the more the fanatic judges exerted their severity, these idiots increased in number, and resisted their authority.

But there were a greater number of informers than criminals. If a girl became pregnant, and her gallant was unknown, it was the devil who had got her with child. If any farmers procured by their industry a more abundant crop than that of their neighbours, it was because they were forcerers ; the inquisition committed them to the flames, and sold their effects for its own advantage. The pope delegated into every part of Germany, as well as into several other places, judges who were ever delivering up victims to the secular arm ; so that the laity for a long time were only the guards and the executioners of priests. We see, it is still the case in Spain and in Portugal.

In proportion as a province was ignorant and brutal, the dominion of Satan was there acknowledged. We have a collection of judgments given in the case
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of witches and forcerers. It was made in 1607, by a judge of great reputation, at St. Claude, whose name was Boguet; and the work had the approbation of a great number of bishops. A person who should write such a work at this time would be put into an hospital as a mad-man: but at that time, all the other judges were as barbarously foolish as himself. Every province had a register of the same nature. At length, when philosophy began to enlighten men a little, they ceased to pursue forcerers, and they totally disappeared.

*Of Parricides.**

I MAY venture to say, that it is with parricide, as it was with sorcery. When the judges of Languedoc give up the enormous prepossession, that every Protestant father of a family assassinates his children, the moment he suspects them of an inclination to the Roman Catholic religion, we shall hear of no more proceedings on account of parricides. This crime is, in fact, a more uncommon one, than that of making a covenant with the devil. It is very possible, that a weak woman, whom a preacher had warned in his sermon, not to go and lie with a he-goat at the nocturnal assemblies of witches, should conceive a desire to go to those assemblies, and to lie with a he-goat. It is possible, that being rubbed with a certain ointment, women should dream in the night, they have had favors of the devil. But it is not in nature, that a father or mother should cut the throat of their child, in order to render themselves acceptable to God. Perhaps, indeed, if the suspicion were continued, that it is the practice of Protestants to assassinate

* The reader will see, that throughout this work I have extended the meaning of the word parricide, as if it were derived from the French word *parens*, kindred, and not from the Latin *parens*, parent; and I conceived myself often under a necessity of doing it, to express the author's sense without a periphrase. T.
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their children, lest they should become Catholics, the Catholic religion would be rendered so odious to them, that the voice of Nature might in time be silenced in some unhappy and fanatical parents ; and a strong temptation would be given to commit the very crime, of which they were so groundlessly suspected.

An Italian writer says, that a monk of Calabria took it into his head to go from village to village, to preach against bestiality, and described it in so lively a manner, that in three months there were fifty women accused of that horrible crime.

Toleration necessary to render Society supportable.

THAT pride is a passion extremely terrible, which would force men to think as we do. But is it not extreme folly to believe, we shall induce them to adopt our dogmas, by continually loading them with the most atrocious calumnies, by persecuting them, dragging them to the gallies, hanging them, breaking them alive on the wheel, or committing them to the flames ?

An Irish priest has lately written, (in a pamphlet but little known) that we are a century too late in our declamations against intolerance ; that barbarism has given place to mildness, and that this is not a time to complain. I would answer to those who speak in this manner, " See what passes before your eyes ; and " if you have the hearts of men, you will feel the " compassion we do." Eight preachers among the unfortunate Protestants have been hanged in France since the year 1745. The *billets de confession* have occasioned a multitude of troubles. And a wretched fanatic, from the very dregs of the people, having attempted to assassinate his king in 1757, when first interrogated by the parliament, said,* he had committed the

* Trial of Damien, p. 131.

shocking

shocking parricide from a principle of religion, and he added this dangerous position, "he who is good only with a view to himself, is good for nothing." How came he by this principle? Who taught a scullion in a college, or a miserable footman,* to speak in this manner? When put to the torture, he asserted, that assassination was a *meritorious work*,† and that he had heard the same thing maintained by all the priests who attended in the hall of the palace, where the courts of justice are held.

The contagion of fanaticism still subsists. The poison, which occasions it, is so powerful, that a priest of Languedoc (the country of Calas and Sirven) has lately published an apology for the massacre ‡ of St. Bartholomew. Another § has published a justification of the murders committed by Urbain Grandier; and when the Treatise on Toleration, a work as useful as it is humane, appeared in France, it was not suffered to be sold. That Treatise has certainly done some good; has dissipated some prejudices; and inspired a horror for fanaticism and persecution; but in the representation which he has given of religious cruelty, the author has omitted some circumstances, which, while it renders the picture more striking and terrible, would have imparted a lesson of greater importance.

The author has been reproached with having gone out of his way, to shew the folly and detestableness of persecution, when he introduces a relation of Ravillac proposing to the jesuit Le Tellier, that all the Jansenists should be poisoned. That fiction might appear extravagant to any person unacquainted with the mad rage of fanaticism. It may astonish some people to know, that what is only a fiction in the Treatise on Toleration, is an historical fact.

* Trial of Damien, p. 135.

† L'Abbé de Caveirac.

‡ Ib. p. 405.

§ L'Abbé de Menardaye.

It is recorded, in the History of the Reformation in Switzerland,* that in order to prevent the great change, which was likely to take place, the priests suborned a servant to poison three of the principal authors of the Reformation; that the poison not having been strong enough, they provided some of great violence, with which they prepared the bread and wine to be used in the holy communion; in order to exterminate, in one morning, all the new converts, and to afford a triumph to the church of God.

The author of the Treatise on Toleration has not spoken of those horrible persecutions, by which so many unhappy persons have perished in the valleys of Piedmont. He has passed over in silence, the massacre of the six hundred inhabitants of Valtelline; men, women, and children, whose throats were cut by the Catholics on a Sunday, in the month of September, 1620. I do not say, that this was done with the advice and assistance of Charles Borromeo, archbishop of Milan, who has been made a saint. Some passionate writers have asserted this fact, which I am far from believing: but I must say, that there is hardly a city or a town in Europe, where human blood has not been made to flow in religious quarrels; that the number of inhabitants has been insensibly diminished, because women and young girls have been massacred as well as men; and that Europe would have had one third more people, but for theological arguments. I must also say, that instead of forgetting those abominable times, they should be often brought before our eyes, to inspire an eternal horror of them; and that it is incumbent on the present age to make ample amends (a kind of *amende honorable*) by candor and toleration, for the long series of crimes which intolerance has occasioned in sixteen centuries of barbarism.

* Ruchat, tom. i. p. 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7. Roset, tom. iii.

It must not be said, there are no traces remaining of the frightful fanaticism of intolerance. They are to be found, even in those countries which are deemed the most humane. Lutheran and Calvinist preachers, if they were become masters, would probably be as unmerciful and as insolent, as their antagonists have been. The barbarous law, that no Catholic was to remain more than three days in a certain Protestant country, has not yet been repealed. An Italian, a Frenchman, or an Austrian, cannot possess a house, or an acre of land, in that territory; while in France, a private citizen of Geneva, or of Schaffhouse, may purchase the lordships of a parish or a manor. On the contrary, if a Frenchman were desirous of purchasing a domain in any of the Protestant republics, to which I refer, and the governments were to connive at his purchase, there would be a great number of groveling minds, who would clamour against and oppose such indulgent humanity.

Hatred and Injustice, the principal Incentives to Intolerance.

WHAT contributes greatly to keep up the spirit of intolerance, and the hatred of one division of citizens against the other, is the mischievous custom of perpetuating animosities by monuments and festivals. Such is the annual procession at Toulouse, in which God is solemnly praised for the murder of four thousand persons. It has been forbidden by several royal edicts; but is not yet abolished. Religion and government are devoutly insulted every year by a barbarous ceremony; and the insult is redoubled, at secular periods, by the highest solemnities. These are the secular games of Toulouse; for which the people have a plenary indulgence from the Pope. They certainly stand in need of an indulgence

gence; but they should not obtain it while endeavouring to render fanaticism eternal.

The last secular ceremony was in 1762; at the time when John Calas was broken alive on the wheel. While the people were praising God, they massacred an innocent man. Will posterity credit, to what excess at this time, superstition has been carried in these solemnities?

First, the coblers in their habits of ceremony, carried the head of the first Bishop of Toulouse, prince of Peloponnesus, who, without doubt, presided over that bishoprick before the death of Jesus Christ.

These were followed by the tylers, loaded with the bones of all the children massacred by Herod, seventeen hundred and sixty years ago; and though those children had been interred at Ephesus, as the eleven thousand virgins were at Cologne, in the presence and knowledge of all the world, they were nevertheless enshrined at Toulouse.

The dealers in old clothes, marched with a piece of the Virgin's robe.

The relics of St. Peter and St. Paul were carried by the fraternity of taylors.

Thirty dead bodies were also carried in this procession. Would to God! that enthusiasts would confine their zeal to such spectacles! Piety mislaid, may be no less sincere. A foolish populace might fulfil such duties with the utmost ardor (where the police is good) and carry in procession, without harm, the bones of fourteen thousand infants, killed in Bethlehem, by the cautious orders of Herod. But those dead bodies, which renew the memory of the four thousand citizens murdered in 1562, cannot but make injurious impressions on the minds of the people. It may be added, that the White and Black Penitents, marching in the procession, with a masque of cloth over their faces, resemble goblins, which augment the horrors of that dismal festival. People re-

tire from this solemnity with heads full of phantoms; their hearts occupied with the spirit of fanaticism, and overflowing with the bitterest gall against those of their fellow-creatures, to whom the ceremony is designed as an outrage. It was thus they formerly came out of the chamber of meditations in the colleges of Jesuits. The imagination is enflamed by such objects; and the soul becomes atrocious and implacable.

Unhappy men! institute festivals which may soften your manners, which may lead you to clemency, mildness, and charity. Celebrate the victory of Fontenoy, when our wounded enemies were carried, with our own men, into the same hospitals where they were treated with the same care.

Celebrate the generosity of the English, who made a subscription in favour of our prisoners in the late war.

Celebrate the benefits conferred on the family of Calas by Louis XV. and let that festival be an eternal reparation of the injustice.

Celebrate the beneficent and useful institutions for the support of invalids, of the young women of St. Cyr, and of gentlemen in the military school. Let your festivals be commemorations of virtuous actions; and not of hatred, discord, brutality, murder, and carnage.

Strange Causes of Intolerance.

LET us suppose all those things to be recounted to a Chinese, or to a sensible Indian, and that he has patience to hear them. Let us suppose, he could think it of importance to be informed, why men have so persecuted each other in Europe; why such inveterate hatred should be cherished, which is the origin of reciprocal anathemas, of pastoral letters breathing the spirit of defamatory libels, and of *lettres de cachet*, which under Louis XIV. crowded our prisons and our deserts? He might be answered;

but not without shame, that some believed in the doctrine of resistible, and others in that of irresistible grace. At Avignon, it is believed, that Jesus Christ died for all men; in a suburb of Paris, that he died only for some. In one place, we are told, that marriage is considered as the visible sign of something invisible; in another, that there is no reference to unseen things in that union. There are some cities, where the appearance of matter may subsist, without matter itself, and where a body may be in a thousand different places at the same time. There are other cities, where matter is thought to be penetrable. In those cities, there are large edifices, in which one thing is enjoined as an article of belief; and others, in which it is necessary to believe quite the contrary. Men have a different manner of reasoning, according as they wear a white, a grey, or a black robe; according as they are muffled up in a cloak or in a cope. These are the reasons of that reciprocal intolerance, which render the subjects of the same state eternal enemies; and by an inconceivable perverseness, these seeds of discord are suffered to remain.

An Indian or a Chinese, would certainly not understand or believe, that we should long have persecuted and murdered each other for such reasons. He would at first imagine, that this horrible carnage, could have no other source, than moral principles directly opposed to each other. He will be surprised, when he learns, that we have all the same morality; the same which has been professed at all times in China and in the Indies; the same which has influenced all mankind. And how greatly will he pity and despise us, when he knows, that an uniform and eternal morality has not been able to unite or to humanize us, and that scholastic subtilities have made monsters of those, who had been brethren, if they had attached themselves merely to morals.

Every thing I have urged in the affairs of Calas and Sirven, should have been said for fifteen hundred years, from the quarrels of Athanasius and Arius, which Constantine at first treated as folly, to those of the Jesuit Tellier and the Jansenist Quesnel, and the appointment of *Billets de Confession*. There has never been a theological dispute, which has not had fatal consequences. One might compile twenty volumes on this subject; which I would have finished with the contention of the Dominicans and Franciscans, which opened the way for the reformation in the powerful republic of Berne. Of a thousand histories of this nature, it is the most horrible, the most impious; and at the same time, the best attested.

Digression on the sacrilegious Acts which produced the Reformation at Berne.

IT is well known, that the Franciscans and Dominicans have reciprocally detested each other ever since the institution of their orders. They disagreed on many theological points, as well as on the interest of their wallet. Their principal quarrel was on the state of the Virgin Mary before she was born. The Franciscans asserted, that Mary had not sinned in the womb of her mother; the Dominicans asserted she had. There never was perhaps a more ridiculous question; and it was the reason, perhaps, that those two orders of monks were so irreconcilable.

A Franciscan preaching at Frankfort, in 1503, on the immaculate conception of the Virgin, saw a Dominican, called Vigam, coming into the church. "Holy Virgin," exclaimed the monk, "I thank thee, that thou hast not suffered me to be of a sect which dishonours thee and thy son!" Vigam answered him, that he lied. The Franciscan descended from his pulpit, with a crucifix of iron in his hand. He gave Vigam, the Dominican, such a blow

blow, that he left him for dead on the place; after which he finished his sermon on the Virgin.

The Dominicans called a chapter to consult on means of vengeance; and in the hope of further humbling the Franciscans, they resolved to work miracles. After many fruitless essays, they found a favourable occasion at Berne.

One of their monks confessed a young and foolish taylor, called Jetzer, who was very devout to the Virgin Mary and St. Barbara. That idiot appeared to them an excellent subject of miracles. His confessor persuaded him, that the Virgin and St. Barbara had expressly ordered him to become a Franciscan, and to give all his money to the convent. Jetzer obeyed, and took the habit. When his vocation was clearly proved, four monks, whose names are to be found in the minutes of proceedings against them, disguised themselves several times, one as an angel, another as a soul of purgatory, a third as the Virgin Mary, and a fourth as St. Barbara.

The consequence of all these apparitions, which would be too tedious to particularise and describe, was, that the Virgin at last declared, that she was born in original sin; and that she would have been damned, if her Son (who was not yet come into the world) had not regenerated her immediately on her being born; that the Franciscans were impious wretches, who grievously offended her Son, in pretending that his mother had been conceived without mortal sin; that she charged him to publish this information to all the good servants of God and of Mary at Berne.

Jetzer did not fail to obey her orders. Mary appeared again to thank him; she was accompanied by two robust and vigorous angels. She told him, that she meant to imprint on him the holy stigmas, or marks of her Son, in order to recompense, and to furnish him with the proofs of his mission. The two angels tied him, and the Virgin thrust a nail into

his feet and into his hands. The next day, brother Jetzer was exposed on the altar bleeding with the celestial favours he had received. Devotees came in crouds to kiss his wounds. He worked as many miracles as he pleased; but the apparitions continued; till at last, Jetzer knew the voice of the sub-prior, who concealed himself by a masque. He cried out, and threatened to reveal all. He followed the sub-prior to his cell, where he found his confessor, St. Barbara, and the two angels drinking in company with girls.

The monks being discovered, had no part to take but to poison the taylor; they scattered corrosive sublimate on the bread to be used in the communion; Jetzer found the taste of it so disagreeable, that he could not swallow it. He ran out of the church, crying out, that the priests were sacrilegious persons, and had attempted to poison him. A process was instituted against them, which was carried on for two years. The pleadings were before the Bishop of Lausanne; for laymen were not then permitted to sit in judgment on monks. The bishop took the part of the Dominicans; he judged, that the apparitions had really interfered; and that poor Jetzer was an impostor: he had even the barbarity to put that innocent wretch to the torture. But the Dominicans having afterwards the imprudence to degrade him, and to take from him the habit of so sacred an order; Jetzer being rendered secular by the manœuvre, the council of Berne placed him in security; received his depositions, and authenticated this complicated series of crimes. It was found necessary to procure ecclesiastical judges from Rome, who were obliged, by the force of truth, to deliver up the prisoners to the secular power. They were burnt at the gate of Marfilly on the 31st of May, 1509. The minutes of the whole trial are now in the archives of Berne; and they have been printed several times.

Effects of the Spirit of Party and of Fanaticism.

IF the mere contention of monks could produce abominations so strange, we must not be surpris'd at the multitude of crimes which the spirit of party occasions among so many rival sects. Let us ever dread the excesses into which Fanaticism may lead us. If this monster were left at liberty ; if we ceased to cut his talons, and blunt his teeth ; we should behold the same horrors as in past ages : the seed subsists ; and if it be not destroyed, it will cover the whole earth.

Judge then, ye wise and prudent readers, whether it be not better to adore God with simplicity, to fulfil all the duties of society without agitating questions which are as fatal as they are incomprehensible, to be just and beneficent without being of any faction, than to deliver up yourselves to fantastic opinions, which lead weak minds into a destructive enthusiasm, and to the most atrocious and detestable crimes ?

I do think I have wandered from my subject, in relating all these examples, in recommending to men a religion which unites, and not that which divides them ; a religion which is of no party, which forms virtuous citizens and not weak pedants ; a religion which tolerates and not that which persecutes ; a religion which declares, that the whole law consists in loving God and our neighbour, and not that which makes God a tyrant and our neighbour a victim.

Let not religion, by our means, resemble those nymphs in the fable, who coupled with animals and brought forth monsters.

Monks have been the principal instruments in perverting mankind. The sage and profound Leibnitz has evidently proved it. He has shewn that the tenth century, which is called the iron age, was much less barbarous than the thirteenth and those

centuries immediately succeeding, in which, that multitude of beggars arose, who made a vow to live at the expence of the laity, and to be their torment. Enemies to mankind, enemies to each other, and even to themselves; incapable of tasting the sweets of society, they necessarily hate it. They produce among themselves a rigor, under which they all groan, and which each of them encreases. Every monk shakes off the chain which he has formed for himself, strikes his brother with it, and is struck in his turn. Unhappy in their sacred retirements, they wish to render all others unhappy. Their cloisters are the residence of repentance, discord and hatred. Their sacred jurisdiction or police is that of Morocco and of Algiers. They bury in dungeons for life those of their brethren who might accuse them: In a word, they invented the Inquisition.

I am sensible that in the multitude of these wretches which infect half Europe, and which seduction, ignorance and poverty have hurried into cloisters at the age of fifteen, some men of uncommon merit have been found, who have risen above their condition, and have rendered service to their country. But I would venture to say, that all those great men, whose merit has forced itself from the cloister into the world, have all been persecuted by their brethren. Every man of learning or of genius, has there undergone more mortifications, and more severe effects of envy, than he would have experienced in the world. The ignorant and the fanatic, who support the interests of the wallet, have more consideration in such places than would be shewn to the greatest genius in Europe. The horror which reigns at those caverns, appears but seldom to the eyes of the laity, and when it bursts out, it is by crimes which are astonishing. In the month of May, in this year (1766) eight of these wretches, called Capuchins, have been accused of having murdered their superior in Paris.

Never-

Nevertheless, by a strange fatality, fathers, mothers, daughters, on their knees, reveal all their secrets to these men, the refuse of nature, who, altogether sullied with crimes, value themselves on remitting the sins of men, in the name of a God which they create with their own hands.

How many times have they inspired those they call their penitents, with all the atrociousness of their characters? By them, all the religious hatred which has so much embittered human life, has been principally fomented. The judges who condemned Calas and Sirven confessed to monks. Two monks were appointed to accompany Calas to the scaffold: these, having less barbarity than their brethren, acknowledged at first that Calas, while expiring on the wheel, called upon God with the resignation of an innocent person. But when we required of them to give an attestation of this fact, they refused: they were apprehensive of being punished by their superiors for having told the truth.

Nay, however incredible it may be, after the solemn judgment given in favour of the family of Calas, there is an Irish Jesuit, who, in a most insipid pamphlet, has ventured to say, that the defenders of the family of Calas, and the masters of requests who have done justice to their innocence, were enemies to religion.

The Catholics answer to all these reproaches, that the Protestants deserve those which are equally violent. They say, the murders of Servetus and of Barneveldt, may be set in opposition to the murder of Counsellor Dubourg. The death of Charles I. may be opposed to that of Henry III. The gloomy fury of the English Presbyterians, and the madness of the cannibals of the Cevennes, have equalled the horrors of the massacre of St. Bartholemew.

Compare sects, compare times, you will find every where, for sixteen hundred years, almost an equal measure of absurdities and horrors; you will find

every where generations of blind men, tearing each other in the darkness that surrounds them. Is there a book of controversy which has not been written with gall? Or a theological dogma which has not occasioned bloodshed? It has been the necessary consequence of those terrible words, "Whoever hears not the church, let him be as a pagan and a publican." Every sect pretended to be the true church; every sect has therefore always said, "We hate an officer of the revenue; we are enjoined to treat those who are not of our opinion, as smugglers do those officers when they have it in their power." Thus, the first dogma every where, was that of hatred.

When the king of Prussia entered Silesia the first time, a little Protestant town, jealous of a Catholic village, came humbly to request permission of the king, to put all the inhabitants of the village to the sword. The king replied to the deputies, "If that village were to ask my permission to cut your throats, would you think I did well in granting it?" "Oh, gracious sovereign," said the deputies, "it would be very different, we are the true church."

Remedies for spiritual Madness.

THE mad prejudice which makes us think all those culpable who are not of our opinion; the madness of superstition, of persecution, and of the Inquisition, is an epidemic malady, which has prevailed at different times, like the plague. The following preservatives are acknowledged to be the most salutary. First, be made acquainted with the Roman laws to the time of Theodosius. You will not find a single edict to torture, or crucify, or break on the wheel those, who are accused only of thinking differently from you; who do not disturb society by actions of disobedience, and by insults to the public worship authorised by the civil laws. This first reflection will,

will, in some degree, moderate the symptoms of the distemper.

Collect several passages of Cicero; and begin with this passage; *Superstitio inflat & urget, & quocumque te verteris persequitur, &c.** "Superstition is ever present, ever importunate, and wherever you turn yourself it will follow you." This precaution will be very useful against the disorder we treat of.

Do not forget Seneca, who in his 95th epistle expresses himself thus: *Vis Deum propitiari, bonus esto; satis illum coluit quisquis imitatus est.* "Would you wish God to be propitious, be a good man; it is by imitating the Deity we offer him the best worship."

When you have chosen materials for a provision of ancient remedies, which are innumerable, pass to the good bishop Sinenius, who said to those employed to consecrate him, "I must acquaint you, that I will neither deceive nor force the conscience of any man. I will allow every man peaceably to retain his opinions, and I will adhere to mine. I will not teach any thing I do not believe. If you will consecrate me on these conditions, I consent; if not, I renounce the bishoprick."

Then come to the moderns; take some preservatives from the works of archbishop Tillotson, the wisest and most eloquent preacher in Europe.

"All sects," says he, "are commonly most hot and furious for those things for which there is least reason."

"Better it were" (he says in another place) "that there were no revealed religion, and that human nature were left to the conduct of its own principles, mild and merciful, and conducive to the happiness of society, than to be actuated by a religion which inspires men with so wild a fury." Observe well these remarkable words; they do not

* *Cicero de divinatione.*

mean that human reason is preferable to revelation; but they signify that if there were no medium between reason and the abuse of a revelation which forms only fanatics, it would be a hundred times better to obey nature than a tyrannical and persecuting religion. I would also recommend to you these verses: I have read them in a work, which is at the same time very pious and very philosophical.

*A la religion discrètement fidelle,
Soit doux, compatissant, sage, indulgent comme elle ;
Et sans noyer autrui, songe à gagner le port ;
Qui pardonne a raison, et la colère a tort
Dans nos jours passagers des peines, des miseres,
Enfans du même Dieu, vivons du moins en frères.
Aidons nous l'un et l'autre à porter nos fardeaux.
Nous marchons tous courbés sous le poids de nos maux ;
Mille ennemis cruels assiegent notre vie,
Toujours par nous maudite, et toujours si chérie :
Notre cœur égaré, sans guide et sans appui,
Est brûlé de desirs, ou glacé par l'ennui.
Nul de nous n'a vécu sans connaître les larmes.
De la société les secourable charmes
Consolent nos douleurs au moins quelques instans,
Remède encore trop faible à des maux si constans.
Ab ! n'empoisonnons pas la douceur qui nous reste.
Je crois voir des forçats dans un cachot funeste,
Se pouvant secourir, l'un sur l'autre acharnés,
Combattre avec les fers dont ils sont enchainés.*

Discreetly faithful to the hallow'd bonds
Of pure religion—let us, like herself,
Be mild, compassionate, indulgent, wise ;
Nor sink another in the dangerous flood
That we may gain the land. Forgiveness shines
The child of Reason. Rancour is the base
Mishapen progeny of Ignorance.

In

In this our transient day of pain and grief,
Sprung from the same great fire ; so let us live
As owning the fraternal tie divine,
And lighten mutually each others load.
We tread the path of life all bent beneath
Affliction's galling weight. A thousand foes
Threaten, with aspect stern, our frail existence,
Which, always murmuring, we would fain shake off,
Yet always cherish with assiduous care.
Our devious passions wander ; no support,
No guide is near ; now scorch'd with fierce desire,
And now in frozen lassitude congeal'd.
The charms of bland society, at least
For some short moments, may our pains beguile :
A remedy too impotent to heal
The unceasing sting of misery. Wherefore then
Pollute with venom the few cordial drops
Allotted us by fate ? Methinks I spy
A band of desperate malefactors, clos'd
Within some dreary prison, who might all
Each others woes alleviate, with fell rage
And menacing destruction (though denied
The use of other weapons) wield their chains,
And give alternately the wound of death.

When you have furnished your mind with a sufficient number of passages of this nature, you should proceed further ; get into a habit of thinking when alone, and examine what advantage you can have from a desire to command men's consciences. You will be followed by a few weak people, and you will be held in abhorrence by all reasonable minds. If you are really persuaded, you must be a tyrant to require that others should be persuaded like you. If you do not believe, you are a monster to teach what you despise ; and to persecute even those of whose
opinions

opinions you may partake. In a word, mutual toleration is the only remedy for the errors which pervert the minds of men from one end of the universe to the other.

Mankind are in the circumstances of a croud of passengers in a ship; some at the stern, others at the prow, many in the hold and the cabin: the vessel lets in water on all sides, and the storm never ceases. Miserable passengers, who must all be swallowed up! Should we therefore, instead of affording each other necessary assistances, which would soften the ills of the voyage, do every thing to render the navigation dreadful? But this man is a Nestorian, that a Jew; behold one who believes in a native of Picardy, and another who believes in a native of Islebe: here is a family which worships fire, there are Musulmans, and, at the distance of four paces, are Anabaptists. But of what importance are their sects? They should all employ themselves in caulking the ship; and every man, by securing the life of his neighbour for some time, would secure his own; but they quarrel with each other, and they perish.

Conclusion.

AFTER having exhibited to our readers that series of superstitions extending from age to age, even to our own time, we implore those noble and sympathizing souls formed for examples to others; we conjure them to place themselves at the head of those who have undertaken to justify and succour the family of Sirven. The dreadful adventure of the Calas family, in which all Europe is interested, has not exhausted the compassion of feeling hearts; and since the most horrible injustice is multiplied, a virtuous pity will also be redoubled.

It must be said, to the glory of this age, and to that of philosophy, that the family of Calas have received those assistances which have repaired their misfortune, from wise and intelligent persons who have trampled
on

on fanaticism. Not one of those who are called Devotees, it is with grief I say it, have washed away their tears, or furnished them with a little money. None but rational minds think nobly. Some crowned heads, souls worthy of their rank, have given great examples on this occasion; their names will be marked in the calendars of that philosophy, which consists in a horror of superstition, and in that universal charity which Cicero recommends; *caritas humani generis*. Charity! whose name Theology has appropriated, as if it appertained only to her, but whose reality it has often proscribed; charity, the love of mankind; a virtue unknown to hypocrites, to pedants who dispute, to fanatics who persecute.

L E T T E R

From the Marquis D'Argence, Brigadier in the King's Army.

My good friend,

I HAVE read in a paper, called *L'Année Littéraire*, a satire occasioned by the justice done to the family of Calas, by the supreme tribunal of the masters of requests. It has excited the indignation of all honest men. I am told, it is the common effect of this publication.

The author, by an artifice to which no other person ever had recourse, feigns that he has received a letter from a Protestant philosopher in Languedoc. He makes this pretended philosopher say, that if men were to judge of the family of Calas by a letter of Mr. De Voltaire, which has been circulated through Europe, they would have a very false idea of their cause. The author does not dare to attack the masters of requests directly; but he seems to hope, that the arrows he shoots at Mr. De Voltaire will obliquely reach

reach them, as Mr. De Voltaire proceeded on the same proofs which occasioned their determination.

He begins with shewing a desire to destroy the favourable presumption of which all the advocates so greatly availed themselves; that it is not natural for a father to assassinate his son, upon the supposition that he wished to change his religion. To this acknowledged probability, he opposes the example of Junius Brutus, who is pretended to have condemned his son to death. He hoodwinks himself to that degree, as not to see, that Junius Brutus was a judge, who was forced to sacrifice nature to his duty. What comparison between a severe sentence and an execrable assassination! Between duty and parricide! And what parricide! It was necessary, to execute it, that the father, mother, brother, and a friend, should be equally culpable.

He carries his folly so far as to say, that if the sons of John Calas have declared, "that he was the most tender and indulgent father, and that he never struck one of his children," it must be rather a proof of simplicity to believe the deposition, than of the innocence of the accused.

Indeed, it is not a full judicial proof; but it is a strong presumption; it is a powerful motive to examine; and at that time, Mr. De Voltaire only sought reasons for undertaking so interesting an affair, in which he afterwards discovered complete proofs, which he drew from Toulouse.

But you are to attend to a circumstance still more shocking. Mr. De Voltaire, at whose house, near Geneva, I was three months of the time he employed in this affair, required, before he publicly espoused her cause, that the widow Calas, whom he knew to be a religious woman, should swear by that God she adored, that neither her husband nor herself were guilty. That oath was of the utmost importance; for it was not possible, that the widow Calas should make a false oath, in order to be brought to Paris to be punished; she
was

was set at liberty; there was nothing to force her into the hazardous measure, to recommence a criminal process in which she might fail. The author of the *Année Littéraire* does not know with what difficulty a mind fearing God will perjure itself. He says, the requisition of Mr. De Voltaire led to no conclusion; it was like interrogating the judges who condemned Calas, &c.

Can any man make a comparison so absurd? Without doubt the judge would make oath, that he gave judgment according to his conscience: but that conscience may have been deceived by false evidence; whereas the widow Calas could not have been deceived on the crime imputed to her husband and even to her. A person accused knows full well, whether he be guilty or not: a judge cannot know it but by evidence often equivocal. The *doer* of these papers has therefore reasoned with as much folly as malignity; for I am obliged to call things by their names.

He has dared to deny, it was believed in Languedoc, "that the Protestants held it as a fundamental maxim, that they were to put to death those children whom they suspected of an inclination to change their religion," &c. These are the words of this scribbler.

He does not know, that this accusation was so public and so solemn, that Mr. Sudre, a famous advocate of Toulouse, who drew up an excellent memorial in favour of the family of Calas, refuted this popular error in the 59th, 60th, and 61st page of his memorial. He does not know, that the church of Geneva was obliged to send to Toulouse a solemn protest against so horrible an accusation.

He dares to be jocular in an affair of so much importance; particularly, on the thought of writing to the governors of Languedoc and Provence, to obtain by their credit, such informations as could be depended upon. What measure more prudent could have been taken?

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I would not say any thing of the little literary absurdities with which his miserable production abounds. The innocence of Calas; the solemn decision of the masters of requests, are too respectable to be mingled with objects so trifling. I am only astonished that such insolence can be endured at Paris; and that a wretch, who at the same time wants humanity and the respect due to the council, abuses with impunity even the contempt entertained for him.

I beg M. De Voltaire's pardon, for having thus mingled his name with that of such a man as Fréron. But as the most infamous writers are suffered to commit outrages on the most acknowledged merit, I thought an officer animated by the principle of honour, might be permitted to speak his thoughts; and I am persuaded, my dear philosopher, that you can impart some of my reflections to all those who love truth.

You know to what degree I am attached to you.
Chateau de Dirac, D'ARGENCE.
 20th July, 1765.

L E T T E R

From Mr. De Voltaire to the Marquis D'Argence.

24th Aug. 1765.

THE letter which you have condescended to write is worthy of your heart and of your superior understanding. By that letter I have been made acquainted with the insolent baseness of Fréron, with whom I was unacquainted. I have never read his papers; that chance which threw one of them in your way, never served me so ill: but you have drawn gold out of his dunghill, while you have been confuting his calumnies.

If

If that man had read the letter which the widow Calas wrote in her retreat, and which was obtained from her with great trouble ; if he had observed the candour, the grief, and resignation, which were remarkable in her account of the murder of her son and of her husband ; and that irresistible truth with which she called on God to witness her innocence : I know very well he could not have been affected ; but he would have perceived, that ingenuous minds must be softened and persuaded.

*Ce n'est pas aux tyrans à sentir la nature ;
Ce n'est pas aux fripons à sentir la vertu.*

Tyrants feel not the emotions of nature ;
And knaves are insensible to virtue.

As to the Maréchal de Richelieu, and the Duke de Villars, whose protection he endeavours to depreciate, and whose testimony he would reject, he is ignorant it was at my house they saw the widow Calas ; that I had the honour to introduce them ; and that they certainly did not protect her without a thorough knowledge of her cause, and after having long suspended their judgment, as every wise man ought to do before he decides.

As to the masters of the court of requests, they are to see, after their decisive and final judgment, which has established the innocence of the family of Calas, whether a Fréron should be permitted to call that innocence in question.

I embrace you with tenderness, and my love for you is equal to my respect.

L E T T E R

From Mr. De Voltaire to Mr. Elie de Beaumont, Advocate of Parliament.

20th March, 1767.

YOUR memorial, Sir, in favour of the family of Sirven, has affected and convinced every reader, and without doubt will have the same effect on the judges. The attested opinion of nineteen celebrated advocates of Paris, who had met in consultation, appears decisive in favour of an innocent family, as well as respectful to the parliament of Toulouse.

You inform me, that none of the advocates who were consulted would receive any of the money put into your hands as their fees. Their disinterestedness, as well as yours, is worthy of an illustrious profession whose business it is to defend oppressed innocence.

It is the second time, Sir, that you have avenged nature and the nation. It would be an opprobrium too horrible on the one and the other, if so many accusations of parricide had the least foundation. You have shewn, that the judgment given against Sirven is still more irregular than that which condemned the virtuous Calas to be broken alive on the wheel, and then to be committed to the flames.

I shall send to you, in proper time, the Sieur Sirven and his daughters: but I must inform you, that you may not perhaps find in that unfortunate parent, the same presence of mind, the same firmness and vigour, and the same resources which were admired in the widow Calas. Five years of misery and of opprobrium have fixed in him a dejection which will not permit him to explain himself before his judges. I have had much trouble to calm his despair at the delays

lays and difficulties we have experienced in obtaining from Languedoc the few papers I have sent you, and which place in the clearest light, the madness and iniquity of that subaltern judge who condemned him to death, and robbed him of his fortune. None of his relations, and much less those who are called friends, had the courage to write to him, so much were fanaticism and fear in possession of all their minds!

His wife, a respectable woman, condemned with him, and who sunk under their sorrows as they were coming to me; one of his daughters overwhelmed with despair for more than five years; a grand-daughter born among the ice, and infirm ever since her unfortunate birth: all these things tear the heart and weaken the head of the father. He does nothing but weep: but your reasons, joined to his tears, will properly affect his judges.

I must inform you of the only mistake which I have found in your memorial. It does not affect in any degree the justice and goodness of the cause. You make Sirven say, that he has pensions from Berne and from Geneva. It is true, that Berne has allowed towards the support of the father, the mother, and the two daughters, seven livres a month, and is willing to continue that charity during his journey to Paris; but Geneva has not given any thing.

You have mentioned the Empress of Russia, the King of Poland, and the King of Prussia, as persons who have succoured this virtuous and persecuted family. You could not then have known that the King of Denmark, the Landgrave of Hesse, the Dukes of Saxe-Gotha, the princess of Nassau Saarbruck the Margravine of Bade, the Princess of Darmstadt; all sensible to the obligations of virtue, and to the oppression of Sirven, have hastened to confer benefits on them. The King of Prussia, who was first informed, sent me immediately an hundred crowns, with the offer of receiving the family into his dominions, and to take care of them.

The King of Denmark, without being solicited by me, condescended to write to me, and sent a considerable benefaction. The Empress of Russia has had the same goodness. She displayed that generosity which astonishes others, and which to her is common. She accompanied her benefaction with these energetic words, written with her own hand,

Malheurs aux persecuteurs !

May all persecutors be accursed !

The King of Poland, upon hearing of the affair from Madame De Geoffrin, who was then at Warsaw, sent a present worthy of him ; and Madame De Geoffrin has given an example to the French, in following that of the King of Poland. Thus the Duchess D'Anville, who was then at Geneva, was the first to repair the misfortune of the family of Calas. Descended from a father and grandfather illustrious for beneficence (the most amiable of all distinctions) she has never missed an occasion to protect and comfort the unfortunate, with equal discernment and greatness of mind. It is this circumstance which has ever distinguished her house ; and I own to you, Sir, that I would wish it in my power to transmit to the latest posterity the homage due to a beneficence which has never been the effect of weakness.

It is true, she was very well seconded by the first personages in the kingdom, by generous citizens, by a minister who has not yet been reproached of prodigality but in benefits ; and by the King himself, who has compleated the reparation due from the nation and from the throne to an innocent family whose blood had been shed.

The justice done under your auspices to that family has brought more honour to France than the death of Calas has done it dishonour.

Though destiny placed me in those deserts where the family of Sirven and the son of Calas sought an

asylum ;

asylum; though their tears and their innocence imposed on me the indispensable duty of bestowing on them some care; I protest to you, Sir, that under the influence of those sentiments which the two families must have inspired, I have never lost my respect to the parliament of Toulouse; I have imputed the death of the virtuous Calas, and the condemnation of the whole family of Sirven, to nothing but the clamours of a fanatic populace, to the mad desire of the Capitoul David to signalize his false zeal, and to the fatality of circumstances.

If I were a member of the parliament of Toulouse, I would intreat all my fellow members to join the family of Sirven, to obtain other judges of the king. I declare to you, Sir, that the family will never return to its native country until it has been legally, as it has been really, justified to the public. Sirven would never have the resolution or the patience to bear the sight of the judge of Mazamet, who is a party in his cause, and who has oppressed rather than judged him. He could not pass through those Catholic villages, where the people are firmly persuaded, that one of the principal duties of fathers and mothers in the Protestant communion is to cut the throats of their children when they suspect them of an inclination to the Catholic religion. It was that fatal prejudice which dragged John Calas on the wheel, and had almost done so by Sirven. In short, it would be as impossible for me to engage Sirven to return into a country reeking with the blood of Calas, as it was, that the families should have been guilty of murdering their children for religion.

I know very well, Sir, that the author of a miserable periodical libel, intituled (as well as I recollect) *L'Année Littéraire*, gives his word, that in the two last years, the Protestant religion has not been accused of teaching parricide. He pretends, that the Protestants have never been suspected. He has been mean enough to feign a letter, which he says, he re-

ceived from Languedoc. He printed the letter, in which it is affirmed, that the accusation of the Protestants is imaginary: he is thus guilty of the crime of forgery, in order to throw suspicion on the innocence of Calas, and on the equity of the judgment given by the masters of the court of requests: and these things have been suffered! and the public is content to hold such a man in execration!

This wretch introduces the names of Marshal Richelieu, and the Duke de Villars. He is low enough to suppose, that I pleased myself in mentioning those great names. He does not know me. The world need not be told, that the vanity of great names does not dazzle me; that I revere only great actions. He does not know these two lords were at my house, when I had the honour to present the two sons of John Calas to them; and that they did not determine to favour Calas, until they had examined the affair with the greatest deliberation.

He ought to have known, and he only feigns not to know, that you, Sir, in your memoir for the widow Calas, confute that abominable prejudice, which accuses the Protestant religion of ordaining parricide. Mr. de Dudre, a celebrated advocate of Toulouse, had before you, opposed that horrible opinion, and had not been heard. The parliament of Toulouse caused to be burnt on a pile, solemnly elevated, an extrajudicial writing, in which that popular error was refuted. The guards obliged John Calas, loaded with irons, to pass by this pile, when going to the torture for the last time. The old man thought that the preparations were for his death; he sunk into a swoon; he could not answer, when he was questioned, and dragged on the stool; and his trouble served as a reason for his condemnation.

At last, the consistory, and even the council of Geneva, were obliged, by an authenticated certificate, to destroy an atrocious imputation aimed against their religion; and yet, in contempt of these public

acts; amidst the exclamations of all Europe; in contradiction to a solemn decree of forty masters of requests, that a man, destitute of reputation as he is of modesty, has dared to utter falsehoods, in order, if possible, to tarnish the acknowledged innocence of the family of Calas.

That effrontery so deserving of punishment, has been neglected, and a villain saved in the obscurity of contempt. The Marquis D'Argence, a general officer, who was four months at my house, when the business of the family of Calas was most in agitation, is the only person who has publicly expressed his indignation of this vile wretch.

What is more extraordinary is, that Mr. Coqueler, who had the honour of being admitted into your profession, has debased himself so as to approve of the productions of Freron, has authorised his insolence, and rendered himself his accomplice.

Let the author, in these wretched papers, go on calumniating merit of every kind. Let the wretch live by his scandal. Let some bones be thrown to him, for having barked in good time. This might not give any man concern. But that he should insult the whole council; you will acknowledge, that such criminal audaciousness should not go unpunished, in a wretch driven out of all society, and even out of that which has been driven from the very kingdom of France. He cannot, by opprobrium, have acquired a right to insult whatever is respectable. I know not whether he has spoken of Sirven; but the people in the provinces, who have the weakness to purchase his productions, should know that they ought to pay no more attention than is paid in your capital, to the works of a man who is devoted to public mischief and public horror.

I have just read the memorial of Mr. Cassen, advocate to the council. That work deserves to be made public; even after yours. I am told, that Mr. Cassen has shewn the same generosity with yourself;

self; he protects the innocent without taking any recompence. What examples, my dear Sir! and how respectable will the bar be rendered! Mr. de Crosne and Mr. de Baquancourt have deserved the thanks and the praises of all France, for the report they have made of the process in the affair of the family of Calas. We have for the leading judge,* in the business of Sirven, a magistrate wise, enlightened, and eloquent (I do not mean that eloquence which consists in phrases); thus we have every reason to hope for success.

If some judicial forms should be unhappily in the way of our just supplications, which I am far from believing will be the case; we shall have for our resource your memorial, that of Mr. Cassen, and all Europe; the family of Sirven will lose its property, and preserve its honour: no man will be dishonoured but the judge who has condemned them; for it is not power that dishonours, it is the public.

People will dread in future to dishonour the nation by absurd accusations of parricides; and we shall at least have rendered to our country the good office of having cut off one head of the hydra of fanaticism.

I have the honour to be,

With the most respectful sentiments

Of esteem, &c.

* Monsieur de Chardon.

THE END.



THE
IGNORANT PHILOSOPHER,

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

MR. DE VOLTAIRE,

BY THE

REV. DAVID WILLIAMS.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR FIELDING AND WALKER, IN PATER-NOSTER-ROW.

MDCCLXXIX.

IONORANT PHILOSOPHER

THE UNIVERSITY OF

MR. DE VOLTAGE

THE UNIVERSITY OF



NEW

THE UNIVERSITY OF

THE UNIVERSITY OF

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PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON AND WILKIN, IN WATER-LOO-STREET, LONDON.

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STATEMENT OF THE SECRETARY

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I suspect; I have even reason to believe, that the planets, the innumerable suns, which replenish space, are peopled with sensible and thinking beings. But ~~an eternal barrier divides us from them, and none of those inter-
mediaries of other globes have had any communication~~ with us.

In a work, intitled *Quæstiones de Natura et Vita*, the author, the prior, says to the knight, that the stars were made for the earth, and that the earth as well as the animals were made for man. But as the little globe of earth moves with the other planets, motions of the stars might eternally take place, if there were no men existing; as there are on our little planet, a number of animals infinitely greater than of men. I thought that the prior had too much self-love, in flattering himself that every thing had been made for him. I see that man, while alive, would be devoured by all animals, if he were without defence; and that all devour him even after his death. I have, therefore, had some difficulty in believing that the prior and the knight were foreigners of nature. A flying around me, in head of being a king; confined to a point, and in-

IGNORANT PHILOSOPHER.

First Question.

WHO art thou? Whence dost thou come? What is thy business? What will become of thee? These are questions, which should be put to every being in the universe; but to which none of us replies. I enquire of plants, what virtue occasions their growth; and how the same soil produces fruits so different from each other? These beings, insensible and mute, though enriched with a divine faculty, leave me to my ignorance and my vain conjectures.

I interrogate that croud of animals, who are endowed with motion and the power of communicating it; who enjoy the same sensations with myself; who have some ideas, some memory, and all the passions. They know, even less than I do, what they are, why they exist, and what will become of them?

B

I sus-

I suspect ; I have even reason to believe, that the planets, the innumerable suns* which replenish space, are peopled with sensible and thinking beings. But an eternal barrier divides us ; and none of those inhabitants of other globes have had any communication with us.

In a work, intitled *Spectacle de la Nature*, or *Nature displayed*, the prior says to the knight, that the stars were made for the earth, and that the earth as well as the animals, were made for man. But as the little globe of earth moves with the other planets round the sun ; as the regular and proportionate motions of the stars might eternally take place, if there were no men existing ; as there are on our little planet, a number of animals infinitely greater than of men, I thought that the prior had too much self-love, in flattering himself that every thing had been made for him. I see that man, while alive, would be devoured by all animals, if he were without defence ; and that all devour him even after his death. I have, therefore, had some difficulty in believing that the prior and the knight were sovereigns of nature. A slave to every thing around me, instead of being a king ; confined to a point, and surrounded by immensity, I begin by searching into myself.

II. *Our Weakness.*
I AM a weak animal. I come into the world, without knowledge, strength, or instinct. I cannot even crawl to my mother's breast, like every other quadruped. I acquire a few ideas, only as I acquire

* This is translated literally ; though it can hardly be imagined that Mr. de Voltaire should suppose suns inhabited.

a little strength, when my organs begin to develop themselves. This strength encreases in me, until having attained a certain degree, it daily decreases. The power of conceiving ideas encreases in the same manner to a certain degree, and then insensibly vanishes.

What is the nature of that mechanism which from one moment to another encreases the strength of my members to a prescribed boundary? I know not: and those who have spent their lives in search of this cause, know no more of it than I do.

What is that other power which introduces images into my brain; which preserves them in my memory? Those who are paid for this knowledge have sought it in vain. We are all as ignorant of first principles as we were in our cradles.

III.

How am I to think?

Have I been taught any thing by the books that have been written for two thousand years? Sometimes a wish will arise in us to know how we think, though we seldom feel an inclination to know how we digest, or how we walk. I have interrogated my reason, and asked what it is? The question has always confounded it.

I have tried to discover by it if the same springs which enable me to digest or to walk, are those by which I have ideas. I have never been able to conceive how, or wherefore these ideas fled when hunger made my body languish, and how they sprung up again when I had eaten. I have observed so great a difference between my thoughts and my nourishment, without which I should not think, that I have believed there was a substance in me which reason-

ed, and another substance which digested. However, on endeavouring always to prove to myself that we are two, I palpably felt that I am only one; and that contradiction has always given me extreme pain.

I have asked some of my fellow creatures who cultivate the earth, our common mother, with great industry, if they felt themselves double beings; if they had discovered by their philosophy, that they possessed within them an immortal substance and yet formed of nothing, existing without extent, acting on their nerves without touching them, and actually sent into their mother's womb six weeks before their conception? They thought I was laughing at them, and went on with their labor without making me any answer.

IV.

Is it necessary I should know?

SEEING therefore, that a prodigious number of men had not even the least idea of the difficulties which gave me uneasiness, and did not perplex themselves with what was said in the schools, of being in the abstract, of matter and spirit, &c. observing that they often diverted themselves with what I was desirous of knowing, I suspected it was not necessary that we should know them. I thought nature had given to every being the portion that is proper for him; and I believed that those things which we could not obtain were not designed for us. But notwithstanding this despondency, I cannot suppress the desire of being instructed; and my disappointed curiosity is ever insatiable.

V. *Ari-*

V.

Aristotle, Descartes and Gassendi.

ARISTOTLE begins by saying, that incredulity is the source of wisdom. Descartes has extended this opinion; and both have taught me not to believe any thing they say to me. Descartes particularly, after having seemed to doubt, speaks in a tone so decisive of what he does not understand; he is so sure of his fact, when he grossly deceives himself in physics; he fabricates a world so entirely imaginary; his vortices and his three elements are so extremely ridiculous, that I ought to suspect every thing he says to me of the soul, after having so greatly deceived me in regard to bodies. Let his memory be loaded with praises, provided there be none bestowed on philosophical romances, consigned at this time to contempt by all Europe.

He believes, or he feigns to believe, that we are born with metaphysical ideas. I would as soon say that Homer was born with the Iliad in his head. It is very true, that Homer when he came into the world, had a brain so constructed, that having afterwards acquired poetic ideas, some beautiful, some incoherent, some exaggerated, he at last composed the Iliad. We bring with us into the world the seed of what is afterwards unfolded in us; but we have no more innate ideas, than *Raphael* or *Michael Angelo* had pencils and colours in their heads at their birth.

Descartes, in order to unite the scattered parts of his chimeras, supposed that man always thinks. I would as soon imagine, that the birds always fly, or that

that dogs always run, because the former have the faculty of flying, and the latter of running.

By slightly consulting our own experience and that of human nature, we may be fully convinced of the contrary. There is no man foolish enough to believe firmly that he has been thinking all his life day and night, without interruption, from the time of being a foetus to that of his last illness. The resource of those, who have been desirous of defending this romance, has been to say, that we always think, but that we do not always perceive it. It would avail as much to say, we drink, eat, and ride, without knowing it. If you do not perceive that you have any ideas, how can you affirm that you have them? Gassendi very properly diverted himself with this system. Do you know the consequence? Gassendi and Descartes were considered as Atheists because they reasoned.

VI.

Beasts.

WHILE men were supposed to have uninterrupted ideas, perceptions and conceptions, it naturally followed that beasts had them also; for it cannot be disputed that a dog has an idea of the master he obeys, and of the game that he brings him. It is evident he has memory, and that he combines some ideas. Thus therefore, if thought in man were the essence of his soul, thought in a dog would also be the essence of his soul: and if man were always to have ideas, animals also would have them always. In order to remove this difficulty, the fabricator of vortices and fluted matter, ventured to assert that brutes were mere machines, who sought food without having an appetite; who had the organs of sentiment

timent without experiencing the least sensation; who cried without pain; who testified their pleasure without joy; who possessed a brain which was not to receive the slightest idea; and who were thus perpetual contradictions to nature.

This system was as ridiculous as the other; but instead of convincing him of its extravagance, he was treated as impious. It was pretended that this system contradicted the holy scriptures; which say, in the book of Genesis, "that God has made a covenant with the beasts, and that he will require of them the blood of those men whom they have mangled and eaten." This manifestly supposes, that beasts have intelligence, and a knowledge of good and evil.

VII.

Experience.

WE should never mingle the Holy Scriptures with our philosophical disputes; they are things too heterogeneous, and have no relation to each other. Our intention here is to examine only what we can discover ourselves, and this will be reduced to a very little quantity. We must renounce common sense, or allow that we know nothing but by experience; and certainly if it be by experience only, by a series of trials and of long reflection, that we acquire some feeble and slight ideas of body, of space, of time, of infinity, and even of God; it is not that the Author of nature has placed these ideas in the brain of every foetus, in order that a small number of men should afterwards make use of them.

In regard to the objects of our knowledge, we are all like the ignorant lovers, Daphnis and Chloé, whose amours and vain attempts Longus has de-

scribed to us. They took up much time to imagine how they should gratify their desires, because they had no experience. The same thing happened to the emperor Leopold, and to a son of Louis XIV. It was necessary they should be instructed. If they had any innate ideas, it is not to be imagined that nature would have with-held from them the principal, the only one necessary to the preservation of the human species.

VIII.

Substance.

NOT having any idea but by experience, it is not possible we should ever know what matter is. We touch, and we see the properties of that substance. But even the word substance, *that which is beneath*, gives us sufficient reason to think that this thing beneath will be unknown to us for ever: whatever we discover of its appearance, this substance, this thing beneath, will ever remain to be discovered. By the same reason we shall never know of ourselves what is spirit. It is a word which originally signified *breath*, and by the use of which we endeavour to express vaguely and grossly that which gives us thoughts. But if even by a miracle, which is not to be expected, we should have some slight idea of the substance of this spirit, we should not be further advanced; and we could never imagine how this substance received sentiments and thoughts. We know well that we have a little intelligence; but how do we acquire it? It is a secret of Nature; she has not divulged it to any mortal.

IX. *Con-*

IX.

Confined Limits.

OUR intelligence is very confined as well as the strength of our bodies. There are men much more robust than others ; there may be also a Hercules in regard to thought. But, in fact, this superiority is a trivial thing. One man may lift up ten times the quantity of matter I do : another can without paper make a division of fifteen figures, while I can only divide three or four with extreme difficulty. To this is the force so much boasted of reduced : it soon approaches its limits ; and therefore, in games of combination, no man, after having trained himself by the utmost application and by a long habit, can get beyond the degree which he has power to reach. He is astonished at the boundaries of his intelligence. It is absolutely necessary it should be so ; for we should otherwise go from degree to degree, even to infinity.

X.

Impossible Discoveries.

IN the small circle where we are confined, let us see therefore what we are condemned to be ignorant of, and what we may have a little knowledge of. We have already seen that we cannot lay hold of any first spring, or any first principle.

Wherefore does my arm obey my will ? We are so accustomed to this incomprehensible phenomenon, that

that very few attend to it ; and when we wish to find out the cause of an effect so common, we find that there is really an infinity between our will and the obedience of our members ; *i. e.* there is no proportion between the one and the other, no reason, no appearance of cause ; and we feel that we may think to eternity without being able to imagine the least shade of probability.

XI.

Despair.

THUS stopped in our first steps, and vainly relying on ourselves, we are frightened out of the employment of seeking, when we can never find ourselves. There are none even of our senses which can be explained.

With the assistance of triangles we obtain something like knowledge that the sun and the earth are about thirty millions of our great geometrical leagues from each other : but what is the sun ? why does it turn on its axis ? and why in one sense rather than another ? And why does Saturn as well as our globe turn round this star, from west to east, rather than from east to west ? We shall not only never be satisfied in regard to this question, but we shall never perceive the least possibility of even imagining a physical cause. Why ? Because the knot which occasions this difficulty is among the first principles of things.

It is the same in regard to that which acts within us, as to that which acts in the immense space of nature. There is in the arrangement of the stars, and in the conformation of a hand-worm or of man, a first principle, an approach to which must necessarily be forbidden to us : for if we could obtain the knowledge

knowledge of that first principle, we should be its masters; we should be gods! Let us throw light on this idea, and see if it be true.

Let us suppose that we have found the cause of our sensations, of our thoughts, of our motions, as we have discovered in the planets the reasons of eclipses, and of the different phases of the moon, and of Venus; it is evident we should then foretell our sensations, our thoughts, our desires resulting from those sensations, as we foretell the phases and eclipses. Having therefore the knowledge of what would happen within us to-morrow, we should clearly see by the play of this machine in what manner we should be affected, whether agreeably or fatally. It is allowed that we have a will that directs our inward motions in many circumstances. For example, I feel myself disposed to wrath; my reflection and my will repress its first motions. If I had a knowledge of my first principles, I should know all the affections to which I shall be disposed to-morrow; the whole series of ideas that await me. I might have the same power over this series of ideas and sentiments as I sometimes exercise over the sentiments and actual thoughts which I divert and repress. I should find myself exactly in the case of a man who could retard or accelerate at his will the motion of a watch, of a ship, or of any other known machine.

On this supposition, being master of the ideas designed for me to-morrow, I should be so likewise for the following day, and even for the remainder of my life. I might then be all-powerful with regard to myself. I should be to myself a god. I feel plainly that this state is incompatible with my nature. It is therefore impossible that I should know any thing of the first principle which enables me to think and act.

XII.

Human Weakness.

THAT which is impossible to my nature, so weak, so limited, and of so short duration, is it also impossible in other globes in other species of being? Are there superior intelligences, who have all their ideas at command, and who think and feel as they please? I am entirely ignorant in this case. I know only my own weakness; I have no idea of the power of others.

XIII.

Am I free?

LET us not go beyond the circle of our existence, but persevere in examining ourselves as far as we are able. I remember that one day, before I had put all the preceding questions, a reasoner would have induced me to reason. He asked me, if I was free? I answered, that I was not in prison; that I had the key of my chamber; that I was perfectly free. That is not what I ask you, he said to me; do you believe your will is at liberty to desire, or not to desire, that you should throw yourself out at the window? Do you think, with the angel of the school, that a free choice is an appetitive power, and that a free choice is lost by sin? I looked attentively at my man, and endeavoured to see in his eyes whether he was out of his mind; and I answered him, that I understood nothing of his jargon,

However,

However, the question concerning the liberty of man greatly interested me. I consulted the school-men, and, like them, I continued in darkness. I consulted Locke, and I perceived some rays of light. I read Collins's Treatise, which appeared to be the works of Locke perfected; and I have not read any thing since, which has given me a greater degree of knowledge. This is what has been conceived by my feeble reason, aided by these two great men; the only persons in my opinion, who, in writing on this subject, have understood themselves, and the only persons who have made themselves understood by others.

There is nothing without a cause. An effect without a cause is an absurdity. Whenever I wish or desire, it must be in consequence of my judgment, good or bad; this judgment is necessary, therefore my will is also necessary. Indeed, it would be very singular, that all nature, that all the planets, should obey eternal laws, and that there should be a little animal, five feet high, who, in defiance of these laws, could act as he pleased, at the meer direction of his own caprice. He must act by chance, and chance is nothing. We have invented the word to express the known effect of causes unknown.

My ideas necessarily enter my brain. How can my will, which depends on those ideas, be at the same time necessitated and absolutely free? I feel, on a thousand occasions, this will can effect nothing; as when a disorder overwhelms me, when passion transports me, when my judgment cannot comprehend the objects which are presented to me, &c. I ought therefore to suppose, that the laws of nature being always the same, my will is not more free in things which appear to me most indifferent, than in those wherein I find myself impelled by an invincible force.

To be truly free, is to have power. When I can do what I wish, I am at liberty: but I necessarily wish what I wish; otherwise I wish without reason, without
cause,

cause, which is impossible. My liberty consists in walking when I am inclined to walk, and when I have not the gout.

My liberty consists in not doing a wicked action when my mind necessarily represents it as wicked; to subdue a passion, when my mind makes me perceive the danger of it, and when the horror of the action powerfully combats my desire. We may repress our passions; (as I have already signified No. IV.) but then we are not the more free in repressing our desires, than when we suffer ourselves to be led away by our inclinations: for, in the one case as well as in the other, we irresistibly follow our last idea, and this last idea is necessary. I therefore necessarily do what it dictates to me. It is strange that men should not be content with this measure of liberty; i. e. with the power they have received from nature, to do in many cases what they choose. The planets have not this power; we possess it; and our pride induces us sometimes to think, that we possess still more. We imagine, that we have the incomprehensible and absurd gift of wishing without reason, and without any other motive than that of wishing. See Number XXIX.

I cannot pardon Dr. Clarke for having artfully combated these truths while he felt the force of them, and which could not be well accommodated to his systems. No, it is not to be allowed in such a philosopher to attack Collins in the manner of a sophist, to change the state of the question by reproaching Collins with calling man a *necessary agent*. Agent or patient what does it signify? Agent when he moves voluntarily; patient when he receives ideas. What effect has the name on the thing? Man is, in all things, a dependent being, as all nature is dependent; and he cannot be excepted from all other beings.

In Samuel Clarke, the preacher has stifled the philosopher. He distinguishes physical necessity from
moral

moral necessity. And what is moral necessity? It may appear probable to you that a queen of England, who is crowned, and has the holy oil poured on her head in a church, will not take off her royal robes to lay herself quite naked on the altar, although an adventure of a similar kind is related of a queen of Congo. You call that a moral necessity in a queen of our climate; but it is in fact a physical and eternal necessity, arising from the constitution of things. It is as certain that this queen will not commit such folly, as it is that she will one day die. Moral necessity is only a word; every thing which is done is absolutely necessary. There is no medium between necessity and chance; and you know there is no chance; therefore every thing that comes to pass is necessary.

To embarrass the thing further, a distinction has been imagined between necessity and constraint; but is constrain any thing but a degree of necessity which we perceive; or is necessity any thing but constraint that is unperceived? Archimedes is equally necessitated to continue in his room when shut in, and when so entirely occupied by a problem, as not to admit the idea of going out.

Ducunt volentem fata, nolentem trahunt.

The fates lead those who are willing, and drag those who are unwilling.

The poor ignorant philosopher who now thinks thus, has not always thought in the same manner, but he is at length compelled to yield.

XIV.

Are all Things eternal?

SUBJECTED to general laws, like all the worlds which fill the general space, like the elements, animals and plants, I direct my astonished eyes to all that surround me. I seek to know what kind of being is my Author, and the Author of that immense machine, in which I am scarcely a perceptible wheel.

I am not sprung from nothing; for the substance of my father and that of my mother who carried me nine months in her womb, is something. It is evident to me, that the seed which produced me, could not have been produced by nothing; for how can nothing produce existence? I feel myself subdued by that maxim of all antiquity, *Nothing comes from nought, nothing can return to nought.* That axiom carries in it a force so dreadful, that it chains down my whole understanding, so that I cannot contend with it. No philosopher has ever departed from it; no legislator whatever has disputed it. The *Cabut* of the Phœnicians, the *Chaos* of the Greeks, the *Tobu-bobu* of the Chaldeans and the Hebrews, all prove that the eternity of matter has always been believed. My reason, deceived by an idea so ancient and so general, tells me, that matter must be eternal, because it exists; that if it existed yesterday it existed before. I do not perceive any appearance of its having commenced to be; any cause by which it has not existed; any cause by which it has received its existence at one time rather than another. I yield therefore to this conviction, whether it be properly founded or be erroneous, and I fall into my rank with the whole world, until, having

having advanced in my enquiries, I find a light superior to the judgment of all men, which obliges me to retract against my inclination.

But if (as so many philosophers of antiquity have taught) the eternal being has always acted, what will become of the *Cabut* and *Erebus* of the Phœnicians; the *Tobu-boku* of the Chaldeans; the Chaos of Hesiod? They will remain among the fables. A Chaos is a thing impossible in the eyes of reason; for it is impossible that intelligence being eternal, there should ever have been any thing in opposition to the laws of that intelligence. Now a Chaos is directly opposed to all the laws of nature. Enter into the most horrid cavern of the Alps; under the ruins of rocks, of ice, of sand, of waters, of crystals and minerals unformed; they all submit to the laws of gravitation and hydrostatics. A Chaos has never existed but in our heads, and has only served Hesiod and Ovid in composing beautiful verses.

If our Holy Scripture has said that Chaos existed; if the *Tobu-boku* has been adopted by it; we believe it without doubt and with the most lively faith. We are here speaking only according to the deceitful lights of our own reason. We are limited in our observations, as we have already said, to what we ourselves may suspect. We are infants, who attempt to take a few steps without leading-strings. We move, we fall, and faith takes us up again.

XV.

Intelligence.

BUT in observing the order, the prodigious art, the mechanical and geometrical laws, which govern the universe; the means, and the innumerable ends of all things, I am seized with admiration and with respect.

spect. I instantly judge, that if the works of men, and even my own, oblige me to acknowledge an intelligence within us, I ought to acknowledge an intelligence much superior, actuating the multitude of so many works. I admit that supreme intelligence, without fear that I shall ever be obliged to change my opinion. Nothing endangers or affects this axiom in me ; every work demonstrates a workman.

XVI.

Eternity.

IS this intelligence eternal ? Without doubt. For whether I have admitted or rejected the eternity of matter, I could not reject the eternal existence of its supreme artizan ; and it is evident, if it exists at this time, it has ever existed.

XVII.

Incomprehensibility.

I HAVE yet only made a few steps in a vast career. I wish to know, whether this divine intelligence be something absolutely distinct from the universe, nearly as the sculptor is distinguished from the statue ; or whether this soul of the world be united to it and penetrates it, nearly as what I call my soul is united to my body, and according to that opinion of antiquity so well expressed by Virgil and Lucan,

Mens

Mens agitat molem, & magno se corpore miscet.

Jupiter est quodcumque vides quocumque moveris.

Mind actuates the general mass, and mingles with the great body of the world. Jupiter is whatever you behold; and wherever you move.

I FIND myself suddenly stopped in my vain curiosity. Miserable mortal! If I cannot discover my own intelligence; if I cannot know that which animates me; how can I have any knowledge of that ineffable intelligence who presides evidently over all matter? There is such an intelligence, every thing demonstrates it to me; but where is the compass that will conduct me towards his eternal and unknown abode?

XVIII.

Infinity.

IS this intelligence infinite in power and immense, as it is incontestably infinite in duration? I cannot know any thing of this matter, by myself. There is such intelligence existing, therefore it has ever existed; that is clear. But what idea can I have of infinite power? How conceive infinity actually existing? How can I imagine supreme intelligence in a void? An infinity of extent is very different from an infinity of duration. Infinity of duration extends to the very moment I am speaking of it. In this I cannot be mistaken. I can add nothing to that duration which is passed; but I can always add to the space which I conceive, as I can always add to any numbers I conceive. Infinity in numbers, or in extent, is beyond the sphere of my understanding. Whatever may be said to me, nothing gives me light in this abyss. I feel, very happily, that my difficul-

ties and my ignorance, can be of no prejudice to morals. We may in vain have attempted to conceive, of space which is immense, and yet filled, or of infinite power which has created every thing, and which may still be able to create ; this may serve only to prove gradually the weakness of our understanding ; and that weakness will only render us more submissive to that eternal being, whose work we are.

XIX.

My Dependance.

WE are his work. This is to us an interesting truth. For to know, by means of philosophy, at what time he made man, what he was employed in before, whether he exists in matter, in empty space, or in a point, whether he is or is not always in action, whether he acts every where, whether he acts within or without himself ; these are researches which redouble in me the consciousness of my profound ignorance.

I even see, that there have been hardly a dozen men in Europe, who have written on these abstracted things with any degree of method ; and were I even to suppose they had spoken in an intelligible manner, what would be the result ? We have already observed [Question IV.] that those things which so few persons can flatter themselves with understanding, are useless to the rest of mankind. We are certainly the work of God ; that is a truth, which it may be of use for me to know ; and the evidence of it is palpable. All things in my body, are means and ends. All there consist of springs, pulley, moving power, hydraulic machine, equilibrium of fluids, chemical laboratory. It is therefore arranged by intel-

intelligence. [Quest XV.] It is not the intelligence of my parents, to which I am indebted for this arrangement; for assuredly they did not know what they did, when they produced me; they were only the blind instruments of that eternal fabricator, who animates the worm of the earth, and who makes the sun to revolve on its axis.

XX.

Eternity again.

SPRUNG from seed, produced by other seed—Has there been a constant succession, an endless developement of these seeds, and has not all nature ever existed as a necessary effect of that Supreme Being, who existed of himself? If in this case, I were to credit only my feeble understanding, it would appear to me that nature has always been animated. I cannot conceive, that the cause which acts continually and visibly upon her, as it has at all times been able to act, should not have acted at all times. An eternity of idleness in an active and necessary being, seems to me incompatible. I am led to believe, that the world has always proceeded from that primitive and eternal Being, as light proceeds from the sun. By what chain of ideas do I find myself led to believe, that the works of the eternal Being are eternal? My conception, wholly pusillanimous as it may be, hath sufficient force to rise to a Being necessarily existing by himself; but not enough to conceive of non-existence. The existence of a single atom proves to me, the eternity of existence; but nothing can give me the idea of non-existence. How! Is it possible, that space should have had *nothing*, which is now occupied by something? This appears to me incomprehensible. I cannot admit this *nothing*; at least,

till Revelation assists me in fixing my ideas, which carry me beyond time.

I know very well, that an infinite succession of beings, who have had no origin, is also absurd. This has been sufficiently demonstrated by Samuel Clarke. But he does not even venture to affirm, that God has not held this chain from all eternity; he does not dare to say, that it continued long impossible for a Being eternally active to display that activity. It is evident, that it was in his power; and if in his power, who will say that he has not acted? Once more, it is Revelation alone can teach me the contrary. But we have not yet that Revelation which destroys all philosophy; or that light before which all other light disappears.

XXI.

My Dependence again.

THIS eternal Being, this universal cause, gives me my ideas; they are not given me by objects. Unintelligent matter cannot send thoughts into my head. My thoughts do not come from myself; for they come against my will, and often fly off in the same manner. We know very well, there is no resemblance, no relation between objects, our ideas, and our sensations. There was, in truth, something very sublime in that Mallebranche, who had the spirit to pretend that we see every thing in God himself. But was there nothing sublime in the Stoicks, who thought it was God that acted within us, and that we possess a ray of his substance. Between the reveries of Mallebranche, and the reveries of the Stoicks, where are we to find reality? I sink again [Quest. II.] into ignorance, which is the appendage of my nature; and I adore the God by whom I think, without knowing how I think.

XXII. A

XXII.

A new Question.

CONVINCED, by the little reason I possess, that there is a necessary, eternal, and intelligent Being, from whom I receive my ideas, without being able to divine either how or wherefore, I ask, what is this being? Whether he has formed a species of intelligent and active beings, superior to mine, in other globes? I have already said, I know nothing of this matter. [Quest. I.] I cannot, however, affirm that to be impossible; for I perceive planets very superior in extent, and surrounded with a greater number of satellites than the earth. It is not at all improbable, that they are peopled with intelligences very much superior to me; and with bodies more robust, more agile, and more durable. But their existence, having no relation to mine, I shall leave to the poets of antiquity, the business of bringing Venus from her pretended third heaven, and Mars from the fifth. I should confine my enquiries to the action of a necessary being on myself.

XXIII.

A sole supreme Artist.

A CONSIDERABLE part of mankind, observing the natural and moral evil scattered over this globe, imagined there were two powerful beings, one of which produced all the good, and the other all the evil. If they existed, they were necessary, they were eternal, independent, infinite; they existed therefore

in the same place, they mutually pervaded each other; which is absurd. The idea of these two hostile powers, owes its origin to examples, which strike us on earth. We there see men of gentle and men of ferocious disposition, animals which are useful, and those which are obnoxious, good masters and tyrants. Thus two opposite powers were devised, who presided over nature; which is only an Asiatic romance. There is in all nature a manifest unity of design; the laws of motion and gravity are invariable: it is impossible that two supreme artists, in entire opposition to each other, should have followed the same laws. This alone, in my opinion, overturns the Manichean system, and there is no need of great volumes to assault it.

There is, therefore, one eternal power, to whom every thing is united; on whom all depend; and whose nature is, however, to me incomprehensible, St. Thomas tells us, "that God is a pure act, who
" has neither gender nor predicament; that he is
" nature and the agent; that he exists essentially,
" participatively, and noncupatively." When the Dominicans were masters of the Inquisition, they would have ordered a man to be burnt, who would have denied these fine things. I should not have denied them; but I should not have understood them.

It is said to me, that God is simple. I humbly confess that this word also is unintelligible to me. It is true, I could not attribute to him gross parts, which I could separate. But I cannot conceive, that the principle, or the master of every thing in the extent, is not himself in the extent. Simplicity, to speak with accuracy, appears to me too much like non-entity. The extreme weakness of my understanding does not furnish an instrument sufficiently exquisite to lay hold of this simplicity. A mathematical point is simple, I am told; but a mathematical point has no real existence.

I am

I am told farther, that an idea is simple; but I have no better comprehension of this matter. I see a horse, and I have an idea of him. But I see in him only an assemblance of things. I see a colour; and I have an idea of colour: but this colour is extended. I pronounce the abstract names of *colour in general*; of *vice*, of *virtue*; of *truth in general*: but this is owing to my having had a knowledge of things coloured; of things which have appeared to me virtuous or vicious, true or false. I express all these things by a word; but I have no clear knowledge of simplicity. I know no more of it, than I do of infinity in numbers actually existing.

Being already convinced that I know not what I am; I cannot know what is my author. My ignorance every instant overwhelms me; and I console myself by reflecting incessantly, it is of no importance I should know that my master does or does not exist in universal space, provided I do nothing in opposition to that which he has given me. Of all the systems men have invented on the subject of the Divinity, which shall I embrace? None, except that of adoring him,

XXIV.

Spinoza.

AFTER plunging myself, with Thales, into the water, of which he forms his first principle; after having roasted myself at the fire of Empedocles; after running in a strait line in the vacuum with Epicurus's atoms; after having calculated numbers with Pythagoras, and heard his music; after having paid my devoir to the Androgines of Plato; and passed through all the regions of metaphysics and of madness:

ness : I was at last desirous of being instructed in the system of Spinoza.

He is not the inventor of it. He has imitated several ancient Greek philosophers, and even some Jews. But Spinoza has done what no Greek philosopher, and much less a Jew ever did. He has employed a geometrical imposing method, in order to give the net produce of his ideas. Let us see whether he has not erred methodically by means of the thread that conducts him.

He establishes at first an incontestible and clear fact. " Something exists ; therefore a necessary Being has eternally existed." This principle is so true, that the profound Samuel Clarke availed himself of it to prove the existence of God.

" That Being must be in all places where there is existence ; for who can limit it ?

" That necessary Being is therefore every thing that exists ; of consequence, there is in reality only one substance in the universe.

" That substance cannot create another substance ; for as it fills all, where can a new substance be placed, and how can any thing be created from nothing ? How is it possible to create space or extent, without placing in it the very space which necessarily exists ?

" There are in the world, thought and matter ; the necessary substance, which we call God, is therefore thought and matter. All thought and all matter are therefore comprised in the immensity of God ; there can be nothing out of him ; every thing must act with him ; he comprehends all ; he actually is all."

Thus all those things we call *different substances*, are in effect only the universality of different attributes of the supreme Being, who thinks in the brain of men, enlightens in the light, moves on the winds, flashes in the lightning, traverses the universal space in all the planets, and lives in all nature. He is not,
like

like a wretched king of the earth, confined in his palace, separated from his subjects; he is intimately united to them; they are necessary parts of himself; if he were distinct from them, he would not be a necessary being, he would be no longer universal, he would not fill all places, he would be a separate being, like any other.

Though all the changeable modes in the universe are the effects of his attributes, nevertheless, according to Spinoza, he has no parts; "for," says he, "infinity has no parts, properly speaking; if he had, we might add others, and then it would be no more infinity." In short, Spinoza affirms, that we must love this necessary, infinite, eternal God; and these are his words: (P. 45, in the Edit. of 1731.)

"In regard to the love of God, it is so far from being weakened by this idea, that I apprehend no other is so proper to increase it; since it informs me, that God is intimate with my being, that he gives me existence and all my properties, but that he gives them liberally without reproach, without interest, without subjecting me to any thing but my own nature. It banishes fear, uneasiness, diffidence, and all the defects of a vulgar or interested love. It instructs me to perceive, that it is a good I cannot lose, and which I possess with the more advantage, as I know and love it."

These ideas seduce a great number of readers; there were even some, who having first written against him, adopted his opinion.

The learned Bayle has been reproached with having severely attacked Spinoza, without understanding him. I agree it was done severely; but I do not believe it was done unjustly. It would have been very strange, if Bayle had not understood him. Bayle easily discovered the weak part of this enchanted castle. He saw that Spinoza, in fact, composed his God of parts; though he was reduced to the necessity of contradicting himself, terrified at his own system. Bayle perceived his phrenzy in making God

a star and a pumkin; thought and smoke; beating and beaten. He perceived this fable, to be much beneath that of Proteus. Perhaps Bayle should have confined himself to the word *modalities*, and not to the word *parts*; because Spinoza always used *modalities*. But, if I am not deceived, it is equally impertinent, that the excrement of an animal should be either a modality, or a part of the Supreme Being.

It is true, he did not attack the reasons by which Spinoza maintains the impossibility of the creation; because the creation is, properly speaking, an object of faith, not of philosophy; because the opinion is not, by any means, peculiar to Spinoza; and all antiquity have been of the same opinion with him. He combats only the absurd idea of a simple God composed of parts; of a God who eats and digests himself; who loves and who hates the same thing at the same time, &c. Spinoza makes use, always, of the word God, and Bayle takes advantage of him by means of his own words.

But in fact, Spinoza did not acknowledge a God; he has probably used the expression, and said that we ought to serve and to love God, only that he might not frighten mankind. He seemed to be an atheist, in the strongest sense of the word. He is not an atheist of the same kind with Epicurus, who acknowledged gods who were useless and lazy; he is not like a great part of the Greeks and Romans, who diverted themselves with the gods of the vulgar; he is an atheist, because he does not acknowledge Providence, because he admits only the eternity, the immensity, the necessity of things; he is like Strato, or Diagoras; he does not doubt like Pyrrho; he affirms; and what does he affirm? that there is only one substance; that there cannot be two substances; that this substance is extended and thinking; and this is what was never said by the Greek or Asiatic philosophers, who admitted an universal soul.

He

He does not speak, in any part of his book, of regular designs, which are evident in all beings. He does not examine whether the eyes were made to see, the ears to hear, the feet to walk, or the wings to fly; he considers, neither the laws of motion in animals and plants, nor their structure adapted to those laws, nor the profound mathematics which govern the course of the planets; he dreads being obliged to perceive, that all things existing attest a divine Providence; he does not ascend from effects to their causes; but making himself the master of the origin of things, he constructs his romance as Descartes did his, on a supposition. He supposed, with Descartes, a plenum, though it be accurately demonstrated, that all motion is impracticable in a plenum. That was the principal reason, which induced him to consider the universe as one substance. He has been the dupe of his geometrical spirit. How happened it, that Spinoza, who could not doubt that intelligence and matter existed, did not examine, whether Providence had not arranged all things? What could have been the reason, he did not cast a single glance on those springs, on those means, each of which has an end, and enquire whether they proved the existence of a supreme artist? He must have been, either a very ignorant natural philosopher, or a sophist bloated with the most stupid pride, not to acknowledge a Providence whenever he breathed, whenever he felt his heart beat; for that respiration, and that movement of the heart, are the effects of a machine so industriously complicated, arranged with an art so powerful, dependent on so many springs, all concurring to the same end, that it is impossible to imitate it, and impossible for a man of sense not to admire it.

The modern Spinozists say in answer, Do not alarm yourselves at the consequences which you impute to us. We find, in the same manner you do, series of admirable effects in bodies organised, and in all nature.

ture. The eternal cause is in the eternal intelligence which we admit, and which, with matter, constitutes the universality of things, which is God. There is but one substance, which acts by the same modality of its thought on its modality of matter, and which thus constitutes the universe, which makes one inseparable whole.

To this, we answer, how can you prove to us, that the thought which gives motion to the stars, animates man, and forms every thing, is a modality ; and that the excrements of a toad or of a worm should be another modality of the same Sovereign Being ? Will you presume to say, that so strange a principle is demonstrated to you ? Do you not cover your ignorance by words which you do not understand ? Bayle has effectually unfolded the sophisms of your master in all the windings and obscurities of a style apparently geometrical, but really confused. I refer you to him ; philosophers should not refuse attention to Bayle.

However this be, I would observe of Spinoza, that he very sincerely deceived himself. It appears to me, that he never discarded from his system those ideas which might incommode him, merely because he was too full of his own ; he pursued his route, without regarding any thing which might traverse it ; and this is often the case with us. What is more extraordinary, he over-turned all the principles of morality, while he himself was rigidly virtuous ; of so much sobriety, that he drank not above a pint of wine in a month ; disinterested to that degree, that he remitted to the heirs of the unfortunate John de Wit, a pension of two hundred florins, which that great man had procured for him ; so generous as to give away his fortune ; always patient under evils, and in his poverty, and always uniform in his conduct.

Bayle, who has treated him so ill, had very nearly the same character. Each of them spent their whole lives in pursuit of truth by different roads. Spi-
nosa

nosa forms a system very specious in some respects, but very erroneous in fact. Bayle has attacked all systems; what has been the effect of the writings of the one and the other? They have employed the idle hours of some readers; the effect of all writings is reduced to this; and from Thales to the professors of our universities, to the most chimerical reasoners, and even to their plagiarists, no philosopher has influenced the manners even of the street in which he lived. Why? Because men regulate their conduct by custom, not by metaphysics. One man who is eloquent, and of reputed ability, may greatly influence mankind; a hundred philosophers can do nothing, if they are only philosophers.

XXV.

Absurdities.

YOU see we have taken many journies into unknown regions; but are not the wiser. I find myself in the state of a man, who having roved on the ocean, and perceiving the Maldivian Isles with which the Indian sea is interspersed, wishes to visit all of them. My long voyage has been of no benefit to me; let us see, whether I can obtain any advantage from observing those little isles, which seem only to embarrass my passage.

There are a hundred courses of philosophy in which things are explained to me, of which no man can have the least idea. In one, I am made to comprehend the Trinity by means of natural philosophy; for I am told, it resembles the three dimensions of matter. I suffer my instructor to speak, and I pass over the subject. Another pretends to give me a palpable proof of transubstantiation; by shewing me,

me, that, according to the laws of motion, an accident may exist without a subject, and that the same body may be in two places at a time. I stop up my ears, and pass over this matter with more haste than the other.

Pascal, Blaise Pascal himself, author of the *Lettres Provençales*, makes use of these words. "Do you believe it impossible, that God should be infinite, and without parts? I will then shew you a thing which is indivisible and infinite; it is a point moving through all space with infinite swiftness; for it is in all places, and quite entire every where."

A mathematical point moving itself! Just Heaven! A point which exists only in the head of a geometer! which is every where, and at the same time; which is of infinite swiftness, as if infinite swiftness could actually exist! Every word is an expression of madness, and yet he was a great man who uttered these follies!

Another says to me, your soul is simple, incorporeal, intangible; and as no body can touch it, I shall convince you, according to the philosophy of Albert the Great, that it will be physically burnt, if you are not of my opinion; and in this manner, I prove it to you *à priori*, by fortifying Albert with the syllogisms of Abeli. I answer him, that I do not understand his *priori*, that I find his compliment to be a very harsh one; that Revelation only, which he and I at this time have nothing to do with, can teach me a thing so incomprehensible; that I give him leave not to be of my opinion, without threatening him: and I get a good way from him, lest he should do me some harm; for the man seems to me to be very wicked.

A croud of sophists of all countries, and of all sects, overwhelm me with unintelligible arguments on the nature of things; on my own nature; on my past, present, and future state. If any conversation

sation be held with them on eating, drinking, cloathing, lodging, on the conveniencies of life, and the money by which they are procured; every thing is perfectly intelligible. If there be a few pistoles to be gained, every one presses forward with alacrity, no man injures himself of a penny; but when the business is concerning our being, they have not one distinct idea; common sense abandons them. From hence I return to my first conclusion [Quest. IV.] that which is not of universal use, which is not within the reach of common persons, that which is not understood by those who have exercised their faculty of thinking the most, is not necessary to mankind.

XXVI.

The best of Worlds.

IN rambling on all sides to obtain instruction, I met some disciples of Plato. Go with us, said one of them to me, you are in the best of worlds; we have greatly surpassed our master. In his time there were only five possible worlds, because there are but five regular bodies; but there are actually an infinity of possible systems of worlds; God has chosen the best; come, and you will find it agreeable. I answered him with great humility, the worlds which God had the power to create were either better, perfectly equal, or worse; he could not have chosen the worst: those that were equal, if there were such, could not occasion a preference; they were entirely the same; no choice could have been made among them; to take the one was to take the other. It was therefore impossible that he should not take the best. But how were the others possible, when it was impossible they should have existed?

D

He

He made some very fine distinctions, assuring me incessantly, without understanding himself, that this world is the best of all the worlds which are really impossible. But finding myself then tormented with the stone, and enduring the most insupportable pain, the citizens of the best of worlds conducted me to the neighbouring hospital. On the road two of these happy inhabitants were carried off by two creatures of their own species ; they were loaded with irons, one for debt, the other on a bare suspicion. I do not know whether I was conducted to the best of all possible hospitals ; but I was huddled with two or three thousand wretches who suffered as I did. There were many of the defenders of their country, who told me they had been trepanned and dissected alive ; that the operators had cut off some of their arms and legs, and that many thousands of their generous countrymen had been massacred in one of the thirty battles fought in the last war, which is one war of about a hundred million since we have had any knowledge of wars. There were also in this house, nearly a thousand persons of both sexes who resembled hideous spectres, who were rubbed with a certain metal because they had followed the law of nature, and because nature had, I know not how, taken the precaution of poisoning in them the source of life. I gave thanks to my two conductors.

When the surgeon had plunged a very sharp iron into my bladder, and had drawn out some stones from that quarry : when I was cured, and there remained only some painful inconveniencies for the rest of my life, I made my representations to my guides. I took the liberty to tell them that there was some good in this world, as four flints had been drawn from the centre of my lacerated entrails ; but that I had much rather bladders had been lanthorns than have been quarries. I spoke to them of the innumerable calamities scattered over this excellent world.

world. The most intrepid of them, who was a German, and my countryman, told me, all that was a mere trifle.

He said, Heaven was particularly favourable to mankind when Tarquin violated Lucretia, and when Lucretia stabbed herself, because tyrants were driven out, and a rape, suicide, and war, established a republic which bestowed happiness on the people they conquered. I had some difficulty in admitting this happiness. I did not conceive immediately the nature of that felicity conferred on the Gauls and Spaniards, of whom it is said, Cæsar put three millions to death. Besides, devastations and rapines appeared to me things rather disagreeable : but the defender of optimism did not quit his hold ; he continued to say to me, like the gaoler of Don Carlos, " Peace, peace, it is for your good." At length being pushed to an extremity, that we should not pay much regard to this little globe of earth, where every thing happens perversely ; but that in the star Sirius, in Orion, in the Bull's Eye and, elsewhere, all things are perfect. Let us then go there, said I to him.

A little divine then pulled me by the arm ; he whispered me in confidence, that those folks were dreamers ; it was not at all necessary there should be any evil on earth ; that it was formed with an express intention that there should not be any thing but good ; and to prove this to you, I must let you know that things were in this situation formerly for ten or twelve days. Alas ! I replied to him, it is a pity, my reverend father, that things were not thus continued.

XXVII.

Monads, &c.

THE same German laid hold of me once more. He documented me, and instructed me clearly in the

nature of my soul. All things in nature consist of monads ; your soul is a monad ; and as it has an affinity with all the others, it has necessarily some ideas of what passes in them. These ideas are confused, which is a very useful circumstance ; and your monad, as well as mine, is a mirror, concentrical to all the universe.

But you are not to believe that your actions are the consequences of your thoughts. There is a pre-established harmony between the monad of your soul and all the monads of your body, so that when your soul has an idea, your body has action, without one being the consequence of the other. Your soul and body are two pendulums which go together ; or, if you please, one resembles a person who preaches, while another is accompanying by gesticulations. You readily conceive, that this must, of necessity, be so in the best of worlds : for—

XXVIII.

Plastic Forms.

I HAD not the least comprehension of these wonderful ideas. An Englishman, whose name is Cudworth, perceived my ignorance, by my fixed eyes, my embarrassment, and my looking downward. These ideas, said he, seem profound to you, because they are visionary. I will very concisely give you a notion how nature acts. In the first place, there is nature in general ; then there are plastic natures, which form all animals and all plants. You understand me ? Not one word, Sir—Let us proceed then.

A plastic nature is not a bodily power ; it is an immaterial substance, acting without a consciousness of acting ; it is entirely blind ; it does not feel, or reason,

reason, or vegetate; the tulip has its plastic form which makes it vegetate; the dog has his plastic form, which makes him engage in the chase; and man has his plastic form, which makes him reason. These forms are the immediate agents of the Deity. No ministers in the world are of greater fidelity; for they bestow every thing and retain nothing for themselves. You see clearly, these are the true principles of things; and that plastic natures are, at least, of equal authority with a pre-established harmony, or with monads which are the concentrical mirrors of the universe. I readily confessed, that the one was as good as the other.

XXIX.

Locke.

AFTER so many unsuccessful attempts; fatigued, harrassed; ashamed of having searched for a great number of truths, and found only so many chimeras, I am returned to Locke, as the prodigal son returned to the house of his father. I have thrown myself into the arms of a modest man, who never affects to know what he really does not know; who, in truth, is not master of immense riches, but whose estates are well secured, and who enjoys the most substantial wealth without ostentation. He fixes me in the opinion which I always had, that nothing is introduced into our minds but by means of our senses.

—That there are no innate ideas:

—That we can have no ideas, either of infinite space, or of infinite number:

—That I am not always thinking; and therefore that thought is not the essence but the act of my understanding:

—That I am free, when I can do what I am inclined to do:

—That this freedom does not consist in my will; because when I willingly remain in my room, the door of which is locked and the key taken away, I am not at liberty to go out; because I suffer, when not disposed to suffer; and because in many cases, I cannot call back my ideas, though I am ever so much inclined so to do.

In reality therefore, it is ridiculous to say the will is free, as it would be ridiculous to say, I will such a thing: for this would be exactly as if a man were to say, I desire to desire any thing; or I fear to fear any thing: in short, the will is no more free than it is blue or square. [See Quest. XIII.]

That it is in my power to have a will only in consequence of ideas conveyed into my brain; that I am under a necessity of determining in conformity to those ideas, because I should otherwise determine without a reason; and I should have an effect which had no cause:

—That, as I am finite, I can have no positive idea of infinity:

—That I cannot understand the nature of substances, because I can have no ideas beyond their qualities, and because a thousand qualities of any thing cannot convey the knowledge of its intricate nature; for it may possess a hundred thousand other qualities which may be unknown to me:

—That I am no longer the same person than while I have the same memory, and even the consciousness of that memory: for not having any part of that body which I had in my infancy, and not having any recollection of the ideas which occupied me at that time; it is evident I am no longer the same infant, any more than I am Confucius or Zoroaster. I am reputed to be the same person by those who have observed me growing up, and who have always lived with me; but I have not the same existence in any respect; I am not my former self; I am a new identity: and what extraordinary consequences arise from this circumstance?

In short, in conformity to that profound ignorance in the principles of things, of which I am entirely convinced, it is impossible I should discover the nature of those substances on which God bestows the faculty of feeling or of thinking. Are there in reality any substances whose essence it is to think; which are always thinking, and which think by a power in themselves? If there were any such substances, whatever they might be denominated, they would be gods; for they could have no need of the eternal Being, the eternal Creator; because they possess their essences independent of him, and think without his assistance.

Secondly, if the eternal God has given to these beings the faculty of feeling and of thinking, he has given them what did not essentially belong to them; he, therefore, could have given this faculty to all beings.

Thirdly, We cannot know the first principles which constitute any being; it is, therefore, impossible we should know, whether a Being be capable or incapable of sensation and thought. The words *matter* and *spirit* are meer words; we have no accurate ideas of these two things; there would, therefore, in fact, be as much temerity in saying that a body organised by God himself, could not receive thought from God, as it would be absurd to say that spirit could not think.

Fourthly, Suppose there were substances perfectly spiritual, which never had any ideas of matter and motion; would they be thought wise and prudent in denying that matter and motion may exist?

I imagine, that the learned assembly, which condemned Galileo as impious and absurd, for having demonstrated the motion of the earth round the sun, had some knowledge of the ideas of Chancellor Bacon, who proposed to examine whether the power of attraction had been given to matter. And, I imagine, that the leading judge of this great tribu-

nal remonstrated to his grave associates, that there were persons in England mad enough to suppose, that God bestowed on all matter, from Saturn down to our little heap of dirt, a tendency to a centre, attraction, gravitation, independent of all impulse; impulse acting in proportion to the surfaces of bodies; gravitation to that of their solid contents. Do you not perceive, that these judges of human reason, nay, of God himself, dictate their sentences peremptorily; anathematize that gravitation, which Newton afterwards demonstrated; that they pronounce it a quality, which it was impossible for God to bestow; and declare that gravitation towards a center is blasphemy? It seems to me, that I am guilty of a similar temerity, when I presume to assert, that God cannot make any organized body feel or think.

Fifthly, I cannot doubt, that God has granted sensations, memory, and consequently ideas, to organized matter in animals. Why, therefore, should I deny that he may bestow the same gift on other animals. It has been said already, that the difficulty is not so much in understanding how organized matter can think, as how any being whatsoever can think.

Thought is a divine quality. This is not doubted; and it is on this account, I shall never know what is a thinking being. The principle of motion is divine. I shall never know the cause of motion; while all my members execute its laws.

The child of Aristotle, while at nurse, drew into his mouth the nipple which he sucked; forming with his tongue an air-pump, exhausting the air, and causing a vacuum; his father, at the time knew nothing of the matter, and asserted at random, that nature abhorred a vacuum.

The child of Hippocrates, at the age of four years, proved the circulation of the blood, by passing his finger over his hand; while Hippocrates was ignorant that the blood circulated.

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We are those children, considerable as we may imagine ourselves: we effect wonderful things, while there is not one philosopher who knows how they are effected.

Sixthly, These are the reasons, or rather the doubts, which have been furnished by my intellectual powers, in consequence of the modest assertion of Mr. Locke. I must repeat it, I do not assert, that it is matter which thinks within us. I say, as he does, it is not becoming in us, to declare it impossible for God to make matter think; that such a declaration would be absurd; and that it is not for worms of the earth to set bounds to the power of the Supreme Being.

Sixthly, I alledge further, that this question is wholly foreign to the subject of morals; for whether matter can or cannot think, whatever thinks should be just; because the atom to which God has given thought, may have merit or demerit; be punished or rewarded; and exist eternally as well as the unknown being formerly called *breath*, and now called *spirit*, of which we have ideas less accurate, than those we entertain of an atom.

I am very sensible, those who have thought that only the being called *breath*, could be capable of feeling and thinking, have persecuted those who have supported the opinion of the sagacious Mr. Locke, and who would not presume to limit the power of God to the act of animating this *breath*. But when the whole world believed the soul was a light body, that it was only *breath*, or that it was a fiery substance; would men have been justified in persecuting those who came to teach us that the soul was immaterial? Those fathers of the church, who thought the soul a thin airy body—would they have been just in persecuting the other fathers, who conveyed to men the idea of perfect immateriality? No, certainly; for a persecutor is always detested. Those, therefore, who admit the doctrine of perfect immateriality

teriality without understanding it, ought to have tolerated those who rejected that doctrine, because they did not understand it. Those who have denied that God has the power of animating an unknown being, called matter, ought also to have tolerated those who have not presumed to divest God of this power; it is very unbecoming and absurd to hate each other for syllogisms.

XXX.

What is it, I have hitherto learned?

HAVING settled my accompts with Locke and with myself, I found that I was in possession of four or five truths, separated from a hundred errors, and incumbered with an immense number of doubts. I then said to myself, these few truths which my reason has acquired, will be but a sterile possession, if I find no principle of morals in it. It is a fine attempt indeed, in an animal so wretched as man, to exalt himself to the knowledge of the master of nature. But this will not be of greater service to me, than the science of algebra, if I do not derive some rule from it for the regulation of my life.

XXXI.

Is there any Thing real in Morals?

IN proportion as I have taken notice that men differ by means of climate, manners, languages, laws, and worship, I have been clearly convinced, that they had the same fundamental principles of morals. All have a general idea of what is just and unjust, without

out the least knowledge of theology. All obtained the idea, at an age when reason began to unfold itself; as they naturally acquired the art of raising burdens with poles, and passing rivulets on pieces of wood, without having any knowledge of the mathematics.

It appeared to me, therefore, that the idea of what is just and unjust, was necessary, because all men agreed on the subject, as soon as they were capable of acting and reasoning. The Supreme Intelligence which formed us, hath ordained there should be justice on earth, in order that we may live there for some time. It seems to me, that as we have neither instinct to direct us to our food, as animals have; nor natural arms like them; and we vegetate for many years in the weakness of infancy, exposed to a variety of dangers; the small number of men who would have escaped the teeth of ferocious animals, from hunger and misery, would have been occupied in contending for a little food, or for the skins of animals; and that they must have been soon destroyed, like the offspring of Cadmus's dragon, when they had acquired strength to use any offensive weapons. There would, certainly, have been no society, if mankind had not conceived the idea of justice, which is the general bond of all communities.

How could an Egyptian, who raised pyramids and obelisks, and a wandering Scythian, who could not even construct a cabin, have had exactly the same fundamental notions of what is just and unjust, if God had not given to each, from the commencement of time, that reason, which in its exertions, made them perceive the same necessary principles; just as he gave them bodily organs, which, having acquired their proper maturity, perpetuate, necessarily, and in the same manner, the race of the Egyptian and of the Scythian? I see a barbarous, ignorant, superstitious herd, a sanguinary and usurious people, who had not even a word in their jargon to signify geometry

metry and astronomy: this people, however, has the same fundamental laws as the sage Chaldean, who discovered the course of the planets; or as the Phœnician still more learned, who availed himself of the knowledge of the stars, and planted colonies at the extremities of the hemisphere, where the ocean is blended with the Mediterranean. All these people declare it to be our duty to respect our fathers and mothers; that perjury, calumny, and murder, are detestable crimes: all, therefore, have derived the same conclusions from the same principles, arising from the exercise of their reason.

XXXII.

Real Usefulness. Idea of Justice.

THE idea of something just, seems to me so natural, and to be an acquisition so generally made by all men, that it is independent of all law, all compact, and all religion. Let me demand the money I lent a Turk, a Guebre, or a Malabar, to supply himself with food and clothing; and it will never occur to his imagination to answer, "Wait, till I know whether Mahomet, Zoroaster, or Brama, ordains that I should restore your money." He will acknowledge, it is just he should pay me; and if he does not, it is owing to the influence of his poverty, or his avarice, over the justice which he acknowledges.

I assert it as a truth, that there is no people, among whom it is either just or right, or proper, or honorable, to refuse sustenance to a man's father and mother, when it is in his power to afford it.

That no assemblage of men have ever considered calumny as a virtuous action; not even a sect of fanatical bigots.

It appears to me, that the idea of justice is so clearly a truth of the first order, and so intirely assented to by the whole world, that the greatest crimes, which infest human societies, are all committed under false pretences of justice. The most heinous of all crimes; that which is, at least, the most destructive and most opposite to the intentions of nature, is war: but there never was an aggressor, who did not gloss over that crime with the pretence of justice.

The Roman depredators commanded all their incroachments to be declared just, by priests, called *Feciales*. Every robber who finds himself at the head of a body of men, begins his ravages with a manifesto, and prays to the god of armies.

Even robbers themselves, when they are associated, take care to avoid saying, Let us go and rob, let us deprive the widow and the orphan of their scanty food; they say, let us be just, let us claim our rights from the hands of the rich who have deprived us of them. They have even a dictionary among them, which has been printed since the sixteenth century; and in this vocabulary, which is called *Argot*, the words theft, robbery, rapine, are not to be found; they make use of words which correspond with gaining, recovering, &c.

The word injustice is never pronounced in a council of state, where the most iniquitous murder is proposed; the most bloody conspirators have never said, let us commit a crime. They have all said, Let us avenge our country on a criminal tyrant; let us punish what seems to be injustice. In short, obsequious flatterers, barbarous ministers, hateful conspirators, robbers plunged in villainy, all, against their inclination, pay homage to that virtue which they trample upon.

I have been ever astonished, that among the French, who are intelligent and polite, maxims have been tolerated on the stage, which are as offensive as they are false; which are to be found in the first scene
of

of Pompey, and which are much more extravagant than those of Lucan, from whose works they are copied.

*La justice et le droit sont des vaines idées,
Le droit des rois consiste à rien épargner.*

Justice and equity are unsubstantial ideas ;
The right of kings consists in sparing nothing.

And these shocking words are put into the mouth of Photinus, minister of young Ptolemy : but it is because he is a minister, he should talk differently ; he should have represented the death of Pompey as a just and necessary misfortune.

I therefore believe, that the ideas of what is just and unjust are as clear and as universal as those of health and sickness, truth and falsehood, convenience and inconvenience. The boundaries of justice and injustice are not very easily ascertained ; as a certain middle state between health and sickness, convenience and inconvenience, truth and falsehood, is not easily defined. They are shades which are gradually blended ; but strong colours are discernable by every eye. For instance : all mankind are agreed, that we ought to return what we have borrowed ; but if I should discover, that the person to whom I owe two millions will employ it to reduce my country to slavery, would it be my duty to put such destructive arms into his hands ? Here are sentiments that divide the mind ; but in general I should observe my oath, when no great evils arise from it. This has never been doubted by any man.

XXXIII.

Can universal Consent be thought a Proof of Truth?

IT may be objected, that the unanimous opinion of men at all times and in all countries, is not a proof of truth. All men belived in magic, in forcery, in demoniacs, apparitions, the influence of the stars, and a hundred other follies of the same kind. Is it not likely, that it has been the same in regard to justice and injustice?

It seems to me unlikely. For in the first place, it is not true, that all men had faith in these chimeras. They were in reality, the aliments of vulgar weakness; and this species of vulgarity affects the great as well as the people: but a great number of wise men for ever ridiculed them; and yet all these men of wisdom always admitted the ideas of just and unjust, as much, and even more than the common people.

Faith in forcerers, demoniacs, &c. is not, by any means, necessary to mankind; but a firm persuasion of the duty of justice is absolutely necessary: it is therefore the effect of the developement of that reason which is given by God; the idea of forcerers, demoniacs, &c. is, on the contrary, a perversion of this reason.

XXXIV.

Against Locke.

LOCKE, who has taught me to be diffident of myself, does he not sometimes impose on himself as I do? He is desirous of proving there were no innate ideas; but

but does he not add a bad reason to some very good ones? He admits it to be unjust in a man to boil his neighbour in a cauldron and to eat him; notwithstanding this, he says, there have been nations of Anthropophagi, and that these thinking beings would not have fed on men, if they had possessed those ideas of justice and injustice which I suppose necessary for the human species. [See Quest. XXXIV.]

Without entering on the question, whether there were in reality any nations of Anthropophagi; without considering the accounts of Dampier the traveller, who journeyed over all America, and never saw any, but on the contrary, was received among all the savages with the greatest humanity; this is my answer:—

Conquerors have fed on the prisoners they have taken in war, and in so doing imagined they acted justly; they supposed they had a right to their life or death; and as they had not much good provision for their tables, they imagined themselves at liberty to feed on the produce of their own victories. In this, they were more just than the Romans, who strangled the captive princes, chained to their triumphal cars, when no advantage could arise from it. I confess, that the savages, as well as the Romans, had very false ideas of justice; but they imagined that they acted justly, and believed it to be their duty so to act: this is so true, that the same savages, when they had admitted their captives into their tribes, considered them as their children; and the same ancient Romans have given a thousand admirable examples of justice.

XXXV.

Against Locke.

I AGREE with the sage Locke, that there is no innate idea, no innate principle of practice. This is a truth

a truth so indisputable, that it is evident all children would have a distinct notion of the Deity, if they were born with that notion, and all men would be unanimous in it, an unanimity which has never been known. It is altogether as evident, that we are not born with principles of morality actually developed; because it cannot be imagined that a whole nation should reject a principle of morality, when it was engraven in the hearts of every individual of that nation.

Let us suppose, that we were born with the following moral principle actually unfolded, that no man should be persecuted for his manner of thinking; how should all nations have become persecutors? Let us suppose, every man had within him the evident law, by which he is enjoined strictly to observe his oath; how should all men, when united in bodies, have ordained, that no faith should be kept with heretics? I repeat it, that instead of these chimerical, innate ideas, the Deity has given us reason, which is improved by age, and which instructs us when we attend without prepossession, that there is a God, and that we should be just: but I cannot admit of the consequences which Mr. Locke draws from this truth. He seems to approach Hobbes's system too nearly, while in reality he is at a great distance from it.

The following are his words, in the first book of his Essay on the Human Understanding.

“View a city taken by assault, and say, if there
“appear in the hearts of the soldiers, stimulated to
“carnage and booty, any regard for virtue, any prin-
“ciple of morals, any remorse for all the outrages
“they commit.”

No; they have no remorse; and why? Because, in their opinion, they are doing justice. Not one of them supposes the cause of the prince in support of which he fights, to be unjust; they hazard their lives for this cause; they fulfil the compact they have entered into; they might have been killed in the assault, they think therefore they have a right to kill; they might have been plundered, they think therefore

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they

they have a right to plunder : besides, they are intoxicated with rage, and rage does not reason ; and, to prove to you, that they are not destitute of all ideas of justice and honour, offer to the same soldiers a greater quantity of money than the plunder of the city amounts to, girls much more beautiful than those they have violated, if, instead of murdering in their fury three or four thousand enemies who resist and might murder them, they would go and massacre their king, his secretaries, and his high almoner ; you would not find a soldier who would not reject your offer with horror ; and yet you require only six murders, instead of four thousand, and you offer the soldiers a very considerable reward. Why do they reject it ? Because they think it an act of justice to kill four thousand enemies ; and to murder their sovereign, in whose service they are engaged by oath, they think to be a detestable crime.

Locke proceeds, and the more effectually to prove that no principle of conduct is innate, he mentions the Mengrelians, who, in pastime, bury their children alive ; and the Caribbees, who castrate theirs, in order to fatten them, as dishes to feed upon.

It has been observed already, that this great man had been too credulous in regard to these fables. Lambert is the only person who charges the Mengrelians with burying their children alive for pastime, and he is not a writer of sufficient authority to be quoted.

Chardin, who is esteemed a traveller of veracity, and who was ransomed in Mengrelia, would have mentioned this shocking custom if it had existed ; and his mentioning it would not have been sufficient to give it credit ; twenty travellers, of various nations and religions, should be unanimous in confirming so strange a fact, in order to give it historical certainty.

We may say the same things in regard to the women of the Antilles, who castrated their children to eat them : it is not in the nature of a mother.

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The human heart is not thus formed. To castrate children is a very delicate and dangerous operation; and it is so far from rendering them fat, that it makes them lean, at least for a year, and is often the occasion of their death.

This refinement is never customary but among the great, corrupted by luxury and jealousy, who think it necessary to have eunuchs to guard their wives and concubines. In Italy, and at the Pope's chapel, this custom was adopted, in order to have singers whose voices were finer than those of women. But it is not very likely, that savages in the Antilles should invent the refinement of castrating little boys to obtain a delicate dish—and what was done with their little girls?

Locke further alledges, that the saints of the Mahometan religion devoutly copulate with asses, that they may be under no temptation to commit crimes with the women of the country. These stories rank with that of the paroquet, who held such a fine conversation in the Brasilian language with Prince Maurice; a conversation which Locke is weak enough to relate, without suspecting that the prince's interpreter had imposed on him. The author of the Spirit of Laws amused himself in the same manner, by quoting imaginary laws of Tonquin, Bantam, Borneo, and Formosa, on the credit of travellers, liars, and persons very ill-informed. Locke and Montesquieu are two great men, in whom I consider this credulity as inexcusable.

XXXVI.

Nature the same in all Places.

IN giving up Locke on this subject, I say with the great Newton, *Natura est semper sibi consona*; Nature

is every where consistent. The law of gravitation acts on a star, on all stars, and on all matter. In the same manner, the fundamental law of morality acts equally on the nations which are known to us. In a thousand circumstances, this law has a thousand different interpretations; but the foundation is ever the same, and this is the idea of what is just and unjust. Acts of injustice without number are committed in the fury of passion, as reason is lost by intoxication; but when that intoxication is over, reason returns; and it is owing to this cause, in my opinion, that human society subsists; a cause, however, in subordination to the necessity of reciprocal assistance.

In what manner then have we acquired the idea of what is just? As we acquired that of prudence, truth, and convenience; by experience and reason. It is impossible we should avoid thinking it a very imprudent action, that a man, in order to obtain admiration, should throw himself into the fire, and hope to escape without injury. It is not in our power to avoid thinking a man unjust, who should kill another in his passion. It is on these ideas that society is founded; they can never be eradicated from the heart; it is by their means that society subsists, even when infested by an extravagant and horrible superstition.

At what age do we discern the difference between justice and injustice? At the age we become capable of knowing that two and two make four.

XXXVII.

Of Hobbes.

Profound and extravagant philosopher! Virtuous citizen, enterprizing spirit! Enemy of Descartes, and yet deceiving thyself like him! whose errors in physics are great, but venial, because destitute of the discoveries

veries of a Newton ! who hast written truths that do, not atone for thy errors ! who wert the first to exhibit the absurdity of innate ideas, the fore-runner of Spinoza and of Locke ! In vain dost thou alarm thy readers by almost succeeding in thy attempts to prove, there are no laws in the world but those of convention, and that there is no justice or injustice but in consequence of the determinations of the community. If Cromwell had found thee alone on a desert island, and attempted to have killed thee for being a partizan to thy king in England, would not the attempt have appeared to thee as unjust in the desert island as in thine own country ?

It is said, in thy Law of Nature, " That every " man having a right to all things, every one has a " right over the life of his fellow-creatures." Is not power here confounded with right ? Art thou, in fact, of opinion, that power conveys a right ; that a son who is robust, has nothing to reproach himself with, if he has assassinated a father who is decrepid and languishing ? Every man studying morality, should begin by refuting his book in his heart ; thine own heart refuted it ; thou wert virtuous, so was Spinoza ; thy crime, like his, was only that of teaching the real principles of virtue which thou didst practise and recommend to others.

XXXVIII.

Universal Morality.

MORALITY seems to me so universally acknowledged ; so clearly intended to be so by the Universal Being who made us ; so admirably designed as a balance to our fatal passions, and a consolation amidst the inevitable troubles of this short life ; that from Zoroaster down to Lord Shaftesbury, I

perceive all philosophers teach the same morals, though their ideas have been very different on the principles of things. We know that Hobbes, Spinosa, and even Bayle, who either denied or doubted of these first principles, have nevertheless strongly recommended the practice of justice and of all the virtues.

Every nation has had its peculiar rites in religion, and very often absurd and shocking opinions in metaphysics and theology. But is it the question before us, whether we should be just? The whole world is agreed in the affirmative, as we have said (in *Quest. XXXVI.*) and which we cannot too often repeat.

XXXIX.

Of Zoroaster.

IT is not my intention to enquire at what time Zoroaster lived, whom the Persians aver to have lived nine thousand years before them, before Plato and the ancient Athenians. I only know that his moral maxims have been brought down to our times; they have been translated from the ancient language of the Magi to the common dialect of the Guebres; and it seems extremely probable, from the puerile allegories, the absurd observations and the chimerical ideas which constitute this collection, that the religion of Zoroaster is of the highest antiquity. In this collection we find the word *garden* denoting the recompence of the just; and the evil principle is signified by the word *Satan*; a word which has been adopted by the Jews. We are there told, the world was formed in six periods or six seasons; and the people are enjoined to recite an *abunavar* and an *ashim vuhu* for those who sneeze.

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But to come directly to the point before us. In this collection of a hundred directions or precepts, taken from the book of Zend, where the words of the ancient Zoroaster are repeated——what are the moral duties enjoined?

That a man should love and support his father and mother; that he should give alms to the poor; never violate his word; and that, when in doubt concerning the justice or injustice of an action, he should wholly abstain from it. [Precept XXX.]

I would rest the credit of my opinion on this latter precept; because no legislator has ever been able to go beyond it; and I am confirmed in my opinion, however clear it may be, that Zoroaster established superstitions in matters of worship; the purity of his morality renders it more so, that he had no intention to impose or pervert; and that in proportion as he gave way to errors in dogmas, he guarded against the possibility of erring in teaching virtue.

XL.

Of the Brachmans.

THE Bramins, or Brachmans, probably existed as an order long before the five kings of the Chinese. What corroborates this opinion is, that Indian antiquities are enquired into with the greatest avidity in China, and that in India they have no notion of Chinese antiquities.

It is not to be doubted but those ancient Bramins were as bad metaphysicians and absurd theologists as the Chaldeans and Persians, or as all the nations to the east of China. But what sublime morality! Life, according to them, was only death of some continuance, after which they were to live with the Deity. They did not limit their duty to justice in

regard to others; they were austere in regard to themselves; their principal duties were silence, abstinence, contemplation, and a renunciation of all pleasures. All the sages of other nations resorted to them to be instructed in what was called wisdom.

XLI.

Confucius.

THE Chinese have not, like other nations, any superstition, or any quackery, to reproach themselves with. The government of China proved to mankind above four thousand years ago, and it continues to prove to them, that they may be governed without being deceived; that the God of truth is not to be served by falsehood; and that superstition is not only useless but destructive to religion. The adoration of the Deity was never so pure and so holy as in China (nearly equal to that prescribed by Revelation). I do not speak of the sects among the people; I speak of the religion of the prince; that of the tribunals; all above that of the populace. What, for a great number of ages, was the religion of all sensible men in China? It was, "Adore Heaven and be just." None of its emperors ever had any other.

The great Confutsé, whom we call Confucius, is frequently placed among ancient legislators; among the founders of religion: but this is owing to inadvertence. Confucius is very modern; he lived only six hundred and fifty years before the present æra. He never instituted any worship, any rites; he neither called himself inspired or a prophet; he only formed into a body the ancient laws of morality.

He persuades men to forgive injuries and to remember nothing but benefits.

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He advises that every man should watch carefully over himself; and to correct on each day the faults of the former.

To suppress his passions; to cultivate friendship; to give without ostentation, and to receive without meanness and only in extreme necessity.

He does not say, you shall not do unto others what you would not they should do unto you; this is only forbidding injury: he goes further, and recommends goodness; "Treat another as you would wish to be treated."

He enjoins not only modesty, but even humility; and he recommends all the virtues.

XLII.

Of the Grecian Philosophers; and first of Pythagoras.

IN natural philosophy and in metaphysics all the great philosophers have talked idly. In morality they are all admirable; they are all equal to Zoroaster, Confucius and the Brachmans. Read the golden verses of Pythagoras; they are the epitome of his doctrines; it is not material from whom they come. Tell me only if one virtue is overlooked.

XLIII.

Zaleucus.

BRING together your common-place observations, ye preachers of Greece, Italy, Spain, Germany, France, &c. let the very essence of all your declamations be distilled; and shall we obtain an extract more pure than the exordium to the laws of Zaleucus?

"Govern

“ Govern your own soul ; purify it ; drive from
 “ it all guilty thoughts ; believe that the Deity
 “ cannot be properly served by those who are per-
 “ verted ; be assured he has not the least resem-
 “ blance to those weak mortals who are seduced by
 “ praises or by presents : virtue alone can please
 “ him.”

This is an epitome of all morality and of all religion.

XLIV.

Epicurus.

THE pedants of colleges, and the coxcombs of seminaries, have supposed, from some pleasant passages of Horace and Petronius, that Epicurus taught voluptuousness by precept and example. Epicurus, throughout his life, was a wise, temperate and just philosopher. He shewed his wisdom at the age of twelve or thirteen ; for when the grammarian who taught him, recited this verse of Hesiod,

“ Chaos was produced the first all beings—”

If he was the first, said Epicurus, who produced him ? I cannot tell, said the grammarian ; the philosophers only know. I will then go to the philosophers to be instructed, said the child ; and from that time to the age of seventy-two, he cultivated philosophy. Diogenes Laertius has preserved his will entire ; and it displays a soul tranquil and just : he gave those slaves their liberty whom he thought deserving of such an indulgence ; and recommended it to the executors of his will to give any others their liberty who should appear worthy of it. There is thro’ the whole of it no ostentation, no unjust partialities.

tialities. It expressed the last wishes of a man, who had never had any, but such as were reasonable. Different from all philosophers, his disciples were his friends; and his sect was the only one in which men were taught to love, and which did not run into various divisions.

After having examined his doctrine, and considering all that has been written for and against him, it appears, that the whole is included in the dispute between Mallebranche and Arnaud. Mallebranche asserted, that pleasure made us happy; Arnaud denied it. It was a dispute on words, like many other disputes, in which the contending parties are supplied with uncertainties by philosophy and theology.

XLV.

The Stoics.

IF the Epicureans rendered human nature amiable, the Stoics rendered it almost divine. To be resigned to the Being of Beings; or rather to elevate the soul to that Being; contempt of pleasure, contempt even of pain; contempt of life and even of death; to be rigid and inflexible in whatever related to justice: such was the character of real Stoics; and all objections to them arose from the discouragement they threw in the way of other men.

Socrates, who was not of their sect, shewed clearly that the virtues could not be improved so highly without being of some party; and the death of this martyr to the Divinity, is an eternal dishonour to Athens, though she repented of it afterwards.

On the other hand, Cato the stoic, will reflect eternal honour upon Rome. Epictetus in slavery, is, perhaps, superior to Cato, because he is always contented in his misery. "I am," said he, "in the
" very

“very place which Providence designed I should occupy; to complain therefore is to offend him.”

Shall I affirm, that Antoninus the emperor, is still superior to Epictetus, as he triumphed over more seductions; and for an emperor to keep clear of corruption, was much more difficult than for a poor wretch not to complain? Read the thoughts of each; and the emperor and the slave will appear equally great.

May I venture to mention the emperor Julian? In regard to dogmas he erred; but certainly not in regard to morals. In short, there has been no philosopher in all antiquity, who has not been desirous of making men better.

We have had persons among us who have said, that all the virtues of these great men have been illustrious sins. Would to God, the earth were covered with such criminals!

XLVI.

Philosophy is Virtue.

THERE have been sophists who, with regard to philosophers, were what men * are to monkies. Lucian ridiculed them; and they became contemptible. They were then what our mendicant monks are in universities. But we are never to forget, that all philosophers have set great examples of virtue; and that sophists and even monks have respected it in their writings.

* M. De Voltaire probably meant what monkies are to men.
T.

XLVII. *Æsop.*

XLVII.

Æsop.

I SHALL rank *Æsop* with these great men. I shall even put him at their head. Whether he was the Pilpay of India; or the ancient forerunner of Pilpay; or the Lokman of the Persians; or the Akkîm of the Arabians; or the Hacam of the Phœnicians, is of no consequence. His fables were in request among all the nations of the east; and that his origin is lost in an abyss of antiquity which cannot be fathomed. What is the purport of these fables; as profound as they are ingenious; these apologues, which appear evidently to have been written when it was not doubted that the brutes had a language? They have afforded instructions to the greater part of our hemisphere. They do not consist of pompous phrases, which tire more than they instruct; they are truth attired in the alluring charms of fable. All that modern languages have been able to add to them, has been a little ornament. In the primitive author this ancient wisdom is simple and naked. The unaffected graces with which they have been embellished in France, have not concealed their original elegance. What is principally taught by these fables? To be just.

XLVIII.

Peace born of Philosophy.

AS philosophers have not been unanimous on dogmas, and have maintained different ones, it follows, that virtue and dogma are things of a different nature.

nature. Whether they did or did not believe that Thetis was the goddess of the ocean; whether they gave credit to the stories of the war of the giants; of the golden age; of Pandora's box; the death of the serpent Python, &c. these doctrines had nothing in common with morals. It was admirably contrived in ancient nations, that their theogony never interrupted their peace.

— XLIX.

Other Questions.

OH, that we could imitate antiquity! that we were able, in regard to theological contentions, to do what, at the end of a thousand and seven hundred years, we have done in regard to the *belles lettres*.

After having been plunged into the barbarism of the schools, we have recovered the taste of pure antiquity. The Romans were never so ridiculous as to suppose, a man was to be persecuted, because he believed in a vacuum or in a plenum; because he was of opinion, that accidents could not subsist without subjects; because he interpreted the meaning of an author, in a manner directly contrary to that of another.

We have recourse daily to the Roman jurisprudence; and when we stand in need of laws (which is often the case) we recur to the code and to the pandects. Why not imitate the wisdom of our masters, in toleration?

Of what importance is it to the state, that our opinions should be those of the reals or of the nominals; that we should adhere to Scotus or Aquinas, to Oecolampade or Melancthon; that we should be of the party of the bishop of Ypres, whose works we have not read; or that of a Spanish monk, whose productions we are still less likely to have perused?

Is

Is it not demonstrable, that all these things should be held of as little importance to the interest of the state, as a good or bad translation of a passage of Lycophron or of Hesiod?

L.

Other Questions.

I KNOW that some men have been greatly indisposed in their brain. We have known a musician die mad, because his music did not appear sufficiently good. Some people have imagined, that their noses were made of glass: but if any were so violently seized as to suppose, that they were always in the right, where could a sufficient quantity of hellebore be obtained for so extraordinary a distemper?

And if, to prove they were always in the right, these disordered wretches were to threaten with the extremest punishments those who thought them mistaken; if they appointed spies to discover all refractory persons; if they adjudged a father on the testimony of his son, or a mother on that of her daughter, to perish in the flames; should not these persons be tyed down and treated like those who are actually mad?

LI.

Ignorance.

IT may be asked, to what purpose this sermon, if man be not free? I did not say, that man was not free. I told you, his liberty consisted in his power to act, and not in the chimerical faculty of *willing to will.*

will. I now observe to you, all things having a connection in nature, the eternal Providence pre-ordained that I should write these reveries; that five or six readers should reap some advantage from them, and that five or six others should despise, and leave them among that immense multitude of writings which are of no use.

If you tell me, that I have given you no information, let it be remembered, at setting out, I announced myself ignorant.

LII.

Other Kinds of Ignorance.

MY ignorance is so great, that I have no knowledge of those ancient facts, with which I am lulled to sleep like an infant in a cradle. I am always apprehensive of committing a mistake of seven or eight hundred years at least, when I enquire concerning the time in which those ancient heroes lived, who first exercised the profession of robbers and freebooters through a great extent of country; and those first sages, who adored stars and fishes, serpents, dead carcases, or chimerical beings.

Who was the man that first invented the six Gahambars, the bridge of Ishinavar, Dardaroth, and the Lake of Charon? At what time lived the first Bacchus, and the first Hercules?

The darkness of antiquity is so great, until the time of Thucidides and Xenophon, that it is hardly possible I should know any thing that has been transacted on the globe which I inhabit, before the short space of about thirty centuries; and in this thirty centuries, how many uncertainties, how many fables!

LIII.

Greater Ignorance.

MY ignorance is of much greater importance to me, when I observe, that neither I nor any of my countrymen have any certain knowledge concerning our own country. I asked Apedeutes, a native of Courland, and my friend, whether he knew any thing of the ancient people of the North, his neighbours, or of his unfortunate little country? He said, he had no more idea of them, than the fishes had in the Baltick.

For me, I know no more of my country than what was said by Cæsar, one thousand and eight hundred years ago, that we were banditti, who had the custom of sacrificing men to I know not what kind of gods, that they might grant us good booty; and that we never went to the chace, without being accompanied by old witches, who offered up these fine sacrifices.

A century afterwards, Tacitus said a few things concerning us, without having ever seen us. He describes us a people of the utmost honesty compared to the Romans; for he declares, when we had nobody to rob, that we spent days and nights in our cabins, getting drunk on bad beer.

From this our golden age, there is an immense void, till the commencement of the history of Charlemagne. When I have brought myself into these times, which are considered as known, I find in Goldstad, a charter of Charlemagne, dated at Aix-la-Chapelle, in which the learned emperor expresses himself thus: "You know, that as I was hunting
" one day near this city, I discovered the hot baths;
" and the palace, which Granus, brother to Nero
" and Agrippa, formerly built."

F

This

This Granus, and this Agrippa, brothers to Nero, are proofs to me, that Charlemagne was as ignorant as myself, and this gives me comfort.

LIV.

Ignorance, which is ridiculous.

THE history of the church established in my country, has a great resemblance to that of Granus, brother of Nero and Agrippa; and is even more ridiculous. Here we find little boys risen from the dead; dragons taken by throwing a garment over them, as rabbits in a snare; consecrated wafers bleeding at a stroke given by a Jew with a knife; saints, when their heads were cut off, running after those heads. One of the legends, which are best attested in our German Ecclesiastical History, is that of the fortunate Peter of Luxemburg, who worked two thousand four hundred miracles, in the one thousand three hundred eighty-eighth and eighty-ninth year after his death; and in some following years, three thousand; of which a clear account was kept. Among these, however, there are but forty-two, who were made to rise from the dead.

I am now engaged in the enquiry, whether the ecclesiastical histories of the other states of Europe, are equally marvellous and authentic? I find every where, the same kind of wisdom, and the same degree of certainty.

LV.

Worse than Ignorance.

I AFTERWARDS discovered the cause of those inexplicable absurdities, on account of which men pronounced curses on each other; hated each other; pre-

persecuted, cut the throats of each other; hanged, tortured, and burnt each other: and I said, if there had been a wise man in those detestable times, it would have been necessary he should have lived and died in a desert.

LVI.

The Dawn of Reason.

I FIND at this very time, in this period, which is the dawn of reason, that some of the heads of that hydra, Fanaticism, are again springing up: their poison however is apparently less mortal, and their jaws less voracious than they have been. There has not been altogether so much blood spilt for versatile grace, as there continued to be a great while for plenary indulgences, sold at market: but the monsters live still. Every man, who searches for truth, must incur the danger of being persecuted. Are we to remain in darkness unemployed? Or must we light a flambeau, at which envy and calumny may rekindle their torches? For my own part, I am no more of opinion, that truth should be concealed before these monsters, than that we should avoid taking nourishment, lest we should be poisoned.

S U P P L E M E N T

TO THE

IGNORANT PHILOSOPHER.

André des Touches, at Siam.

ANDRÉ des Touches was a very agreeable musician, in the brilliant reign of Louis XIV. before the science of music was perfected by Rameau; and before it was corrupted by those who prefer the art of surmounting difficulties, to nature and the real graces of composition.

Before he had recourse to these talents, he had been a musketeer; and before he had been a musketeer, in 1688, he went into Siam with the Jesuit Tachard, who bestowed on him many particular marks of his affection, for the amusement he afforded him on board the ship; and Des Touches spoke with admiration of father Tachard for the rest of his life.

At Siam, he became acquainted with the first commissary of Barcalon, whose name was Croutef: and he committed to writing most of those questions which
he

he asked of Croutef, and the answers of that Siamese. The following are just as they were found among his papers.

DES TOUCHES.

How many foldiers have you ?

CROUTEF.

Fourscore thousand, very indifferently paid.

DES TOUCHES.

And how many Talapolins.

CROUTEF.

A hundred and twenty thousand ; very idle and very rich. It is true, that in the last war, we were well beaten ; but our Talapolins have lived sumptuously, built fine houses, and kept beautiful girls.

DES TOUCHES.

Nothing could have discovered more wisdom or judgment. And your finances, in what state are they ?

CROUTEF.

In a very bad state. We have however, about ninety thousand men employed to render them prosperous ; and if they have not succeeded, it has not been their fault ; for there is not one of them, who does not honourably seize, all that he can get possession of, and strip and plunder those who cultivate the ground for the good of the state.

DES TOUCHES.

Bravo ! And is not your jurisprudence as perfect as the rest of your administration ?

CROUTEF.

It is much superior. We have no laws; but we have five or six thousand volumes on the laws. We are governed in general by customs; for it is known, that a custom having been established by chance, is the wisest principle which can be imagined. Besides, all customs being necessarily different in different provinces, as the clothes and head-dresses of the people, the judges may chuse at their pleasure, a custom which prevailed four hundred years ago, or one which prevailed last year; it occasions a variety in our legislation, which our neighbours are for ever admiring. This yields a certain fortune to practitioners; it is a resource for all pleaders who are destitute of honour; and a pastime of infinite amusement for the judges who can with safe consciences decide causes without understanding them,

DES TOUCHES.

But in criminal cases—you have laws which may be depended upon.

CROUTEF,

God forbid! We can condemn men to exile, to the gallies, to be hanged; or we can discharge them, according to our own fancy. We sometimes complain of the arbitrary power of the Barcalon; but we chuse that all our decisions should be arbitrary.

DES TOUCHES.

That is very just. And the torture—Do you put people to the torture?

CROUTEF,

It is our greatest pleasure. We have found it an infallible secret to save a guilty person, who has vigorous

gorous muscles, strong and supple hamstrings, nervous arms and firm loins; and we gaily break on the wheel, all those innocent persons, to whom Nature has given feeble organs. It is thus, we conduct ourselves with wonderful wisdom and prudence. As there are half-proofs, I mean half truths, it is certain there are persons who are half innocent and half guilty. We commence therefore by rendering them half dead; we then go to breakfast; afterwards ensues intire death, which gives us great consideration in the world, which is one of the most valuable advantages of our offices.

DES TOUCHES.

It must be allowed, that nothing can be more prudent and humane. Pray tell me, what becomes of the property of the condemned?

CROUTEF.

The children are deprived of it. For you know, that nothing can be more equitable, than to punish the single fault of a parent on all his descendants.

DES TOUCHES.

Yes. It is a great while since I have heard of this jurisprudence.

CROUTEF.

The people of Laos, our neighbours, admit neither the torture, nor arbitrary punishments, nor the different customs, nor the horrible deaths which are in use among us; but we regard them as barbarians, who have no idea of good government. All Asia is agreed, that we dance the best of its inhabitants; and that, consequently, it is impossible they should come near us in jurisprudence, in commerce, in finance, and above all, in the military art.

DES TOUCHES.

Tell me, I beseech you, by what steps men arrive at the magistracy in Siam?

CROUTEF.

By ready money. You perceive, that it may be impossible to be a good judge, if a man has not by him thirty or forty thousand pieces of silver. It is in vain a man may be perfectly acquainted with all customs; it is to no purpose, that he has pleaded five hundred causes with success, that he has a mind which is the seat of judgment, and a heart replete with justice; no man can become a magistrate without money. This, I say, is the circumstance which distinguishes us from all Asia; and particularly from the barbarous inhabitants of Laos, who have the madness to recompense all kinds of talents, and not to sell any employment.

André des Touches, who was apt to be a little off his guard, as most musicians are, said to the Siamese, that most of the airs, which he had just sung, sounded discordant to him; and wished to receive some real information concerning the Siamese music. But Croutef, full of his subject, and enthusiastic for his country, continued in these words: "What does it signify, that our neighbours, who live beyond our mountains, have better music than we have, or better pictures; provided we have always wise and humane laws? It is in that circumstance we excel. For example, there are a thousand cases, in which a girl has been brought to-bed of a dead child, in which we repair the loss of the child by hanging the mother; by that means, we prevent her ever having a false birth.

"If a man has adroitly stolen three or four hundred thousand pieces of gold, we respect him; and we go and dine with him. But if a poor ser-

“vant gets awkwardly into his possession three or four
“pieces of copper out of his mistress's box, we
“never fail of putting that servant to a public death;
“first, lest he should not correct himself; secondly,
“that he may not have it in his power to produce a
“great number of children for the state, one or two
“of which might possibly steal a few little pieces of
“copper, or become great men; thirdly, because it
“is just to proportion the punishment to the crime,
“and that it would be ridiculous to give any useful
“employment in a prison to a person guilty of so
“enormous a crime.

“But we are still more just, more merciful, more
“reasonable in the chastisements, which we inflict
“on those who have the audacity to make use of
“their legs to go wherever they chuse. Those
“warriors who sell us their lives, we treat so well;
“we give them so prodigious a salary; they have
“so considerable a part in our conquests, that they
“must be the most criminal of all men, to wish to
“return to their parents on the recovery of their
“reason, because they had been enlisted in a state of
“intoxication. We lodge about a dozen leaden
“balls in their heads, to oblige them to remain in
“one place; after which they become infinitely use-
“ful to their country.

“I will not speak of a great number of excellent
“institutions, which do not go so far as to shed the
“blood of men, but which render life so pleasant
“and agreeable, that it is impossible the guilty
“should avoid becoming virtuous. If a farmer has
“not been able to pay exactly a tax which exceeds
“his ability, we sell the pot in which he dresses his
“provisions; we sell his bed, in order to put him in
“a better condition to cultivate the earth, being re-
“lieved of his superfluities.”

DES TOUCHES.

That is extremely harmonious ! it would make a fine concert.

CROUTEF.

To comprehend our profound wisdom, you must know that our fundamental principle, is to acknowledge, in many places, as our sovereign, a shaven-headed foreigner, who lives at the distance of nine hundred miles from us. When we assign some of our richest territories to any one of our Talapolins, which it is very prudent in us to do, that Siamese Talapolin, must pay the revenue of his first year to that shaven-headed Tartar, without which, it is clear, our lands would be unfruitful.

But the time, the happy time is no more, when that tonsured priest induced one half of the nation to cut the throats of the other half, in order to decide, whether *Sammonocodom* had played at *Leap-frog* or at *My-Lady's Hole* ; whether he had been disguised in an elephant or in a cow ; if he had slept three hundred and ninety days on the right side, or on the left. Those grand questions, which so essentially affect morality, agitated all minds ; they shook the world ; blood flowed plentifully for it ; women were massacred on the bodies of their husbands ; they dashed out the brains of their little infants on the stones, with a devotion, with a grace, with a contrition truly angelic. Woe to us ! degenerate offspring of pious ancestors, who never offer such holy sacrifices ! But, heaven be praised, there are yet amongst us, at least a few good souls, who would imitate them, if they were permitted.

DES TOUCHES.

Tell me, I beseech you, Sir, if at Siam you divide the tone major into two commas, or into two semi-

commas ; and if the progress of the fundamental sounds are made by 1, 3 and 9 ?

CROUTEF.

By *Sammonocodom*, you are laughing at me. You observe no bounds ; you have interrogated me on the form of our government, and you speak to me of music !

DES TOUCHES.

Music is every thing : it was at the foundation of all the politicks of the Greeks. But I beg your pardon ; you have not a good ear ; and we will return to our subject. You said, that in order to produce a perfect harmony—

CROUTEF.

I was telling you, that formerly the tuncured Tartar pretended to dispose of all the kingdoms of Asia ; which occasioned something very different from perfect harmony ; but a very considerable benefit resulted from it ; people were much more devout towards *Sammonocodom* and his elephant than at these times, in which all the world pretends to common sense with an indiscretion which is truly pitiable. However, all things go on ; people divert themselves, they dance, they play, they dine, they sup, they make love ; this makes every man shudder who entertains good intentions.

DES TOUCHES.

And what would you have more ? You only want good music. If you had good music, you might call your nation the happiest in the world.

A short

A short Digression.

WHEN the hospital of the *Quinze Vingt* was first founded, it is known the pensioners were all equal, and that their little affairs were concluded upon by a majority of votes. They distinguished perfectly by the touch between copper and silver coin; they never mistook the wine of Brie for that of Burgundy. Their sense of smelling was finer than that of their neighbours who had the use of two eyes. They reasoned very well on the four senses; that is, they knew every thing they were permitted to know, and they lived as peaceably and as happily as blind people could be supposed to do. But unfortunately one of their professors pretended to have clear ideas in respect to the sense of seeing, he drew attention; he intrigued; he formed enthusiasts; and at last he was acknowledged the chief of the community. He pretended to be a sovereign judge of colours, and every thing was lost.

This dictator of the *Quinze Vingt* chose at first a little council, by the assistance of which he got possession of all the alms. On this account, no person had the resolution to oppose him. He decreed, that all the inhabitants of the *Quinze Vingt* were clothed in white; the blind pensioners believed him; and nothing was to be heard but their talk of white garments, though there was not one of them of that colour. All their acquaintance laughed at them; they made their complaints to the dictator, who received them very ill; he rebuked them as innovators, free-thinkers, rebels, who had suffered themselves to be seduced by the errors of those who had eyes, and who presumed to doubt that their chief was infallible. This contention gave rise to two parties.

To

To appease the tumult, the dictator issued a decree, importing that all their vestments were red. There was not one vestment of that colour in the *Quinze Vingts*. The poor men were laughed at more than ever. Complaints were again made by the community. The dictator rushed furiously in; and the other blind men were as much enraged; they fought a long time; and peace was not restored until all the members of the *Quinze Vingts* were permitted to suspend their judgments in regard to the colour of their dress.

A deaf man, reading this little history, allowed that these people being blind, were to blame in pretending to judge of colours; but he remained steady to his own opinion, that those persons who were deaf, were the only proper judges of music.

A N

INDIAN ADVENTURE,

Translated by the Ignorant Philosopher.

ALL the world knows, that Pythagoras, while he resided in India, attended the school of the Gymnosophists, and learned the language of beasts and plants. One day, while he was walking in a meadow near the sea-shore, he heard these words:—
 “ How unfortunate that I was born an herb ! I
 “ scarcely attain two inches in height, when a voracious monster, an horrid animal, tramples me
 “ under his large feet ; his jaws are armed with
 “ rows of sharp scythes, by which he cuts, then
 “ grinds, and then swallows me. Men call this
 “ monster a sheep. I do not suppose there is in the
 “ whole creation a more detestable creature.”

Pythagoras proceeded a little way and found an oyster yawning on a small rock. He had not yet adopted that admirable law, by which we are enjoined not to eat those animals which have a resemblance to us. He had taken up the oyster to swallow it, when it spoke these affecting words: “ O,
 “ Nature, how happy is the herb, which is, as I am,
 “ thy work ! though it be cut down, it is regenerated and immortal ; and we, poor oysters, in vain
 “ are defended by a double cuirass : villains eat us
 “ by dozens at their breakfast, and all is over with us
 “ for ever. What a horrible fate is that of an oyster, and how barbarous are men ! ”

Pythagoras shuddered ; he felt the enormity of the crime he had nearly committed ; he begged pardon of the oyster with tears in his eyes, and he replaced him very carefully on the rock.

As

As he was returning to the city, profoundly meditating on this adventure, he saw spiders devouring flies; swallows eating spiders, and sparrow-hawks eating swallows. None of these, said he, are philosophers.

On his entrance, Pythagoras was stunned, bruised, and thrown down by a mob of tatterdemalions, who were running and crying, "Well done, he fully deserved it." Who? What? said Pythagoras, as he was getting up. The people continued running and crying, "O how delightful it will be to see them broil!"

Pythagoras supposed they meant lentiles, or some other vegetables: but he was in an error; they meant two poor Indians. Oh! said Pythagoras, these Indians, without doubt, are two great philosophers weary of their lives; they are desirous of regenerating under other forms; it affords pleasure to a man to change the place of his residence, though he may be but indifferently lodged: there is no disputing on taste.

He proceeded with the mob to the public square, where he perceived a lighted pile of wood, and a bench opposite to it, which was called a tribunal. On this bench judges were seated, each of whom had a cow's tail in his hand, and a cap on his head with ears, resembling those of the animal which bore Silenus when he came into that country with Bacchus, after having crossed the Erytrea sea without wetting a foot, and stopping the sun and moon; as it is recorded with great fidelity in the Orphicks.

Among these judges there was an honest man with whom Pythagoras was acquainted. The Indian sage explained to the sage of Samos the nature of that festival to be given to the people of India.

These two Indians, said he, have not the least desire of being committed to the flames. My grave brethren have adjudged them to be burnt; one for saying, that the substance of Xaca is not that of Brahma;

ma ; and the other for supposing, that the approbation of the Supreme Being was to be obtained at the point of death without holding a cow by the tail ; because, said he, we may be virtuous at all times, and we cannot always have a cow to lay hold of just we may have occasion. The good women of the city were greatly terrified at two such heretical opinions ; they would not allow the judges a moment's peace until they ordered the execution of those unfortunate men.

Pythagoras was convinced, that from the herb up to man, there were many causes of chagrin. However, he obliged the judges and even the devotees to listen to reason, which happened only at that time.

He went afterwards and preached toleration at Crotona ; but a bigot set fire to his house, and he was burnt—the man who had delivered the two Hindoo's from the flames ! Let those save themselves who can !

A SHORT

A SHORT
COMMENTARY,

By the Ignorant Philosopher,

*On the Eulogium of the Dauphin of France, composed
by Mr. Thomas.*

I HAVE lately read, in the eloquent discourse of Mr. Thomas, these remarkable words:

“ The Dauphin perused with delight those books where a soft humanity paints all men, even those who are in error, as a society of brethren. Was it likely, therefore, that he should have been either a persecutor or of a cruel disposition? Would he have adopted the fierce spirit of those, who call mistakes crimes, and will put men to the torture in order to inform them? Ah! said he, more than once, Let us not persecute.”

These words affected my heart. I exclaimed, What miscreant will presume to persecute, when the heir of a great kingdom has said, that no man should persecute? This prince saw plainly that persecution produces nothing but mischief; he was well acquainted with books; and philosophy had made its way even to him. The greatest happiness that can befall a monarchy, is that a prince should be well informed. Henry IV. had not read much. For except Montaigne, who is not fixed and determined in any thing, and teaches us only to doubt, there were no books at that time, but wretched treatises of controversy, not worthy the notice of
G a king.

a king. But Henry IV. was educated by adversity ; by the experience of a private and public life ; in short, by his own genius. Having suffered from persecution, he was not a persecutor. He was more of a philosopher than he imagined, while in the din of arms, harrassed by the factions of the state, the intrigues of a court, and the fury of two contending sects. Louis XIII. read nothing ; knew nothing ; saw nothing : he permitted persecution :

Louis XIV. had very good sense ; a strong desire of glory, which led him to goodness ; an accurate judgment, and a noble heart : but unfortunately Cardinal Mazarine did not improve so promising a disposition. He deserved to have been instructed, but he was ignorant. His confessors in time got an ascendancy over him ; he then persecuted and did mischief. What ! was a Sacis, an Arnauld, and many other great men, imprisoned and exiled—On what account ? Because they did not think like two Jesuits at court. At last his whole kingdom was in flames for a bull ! Fanaticism and Knavery, it is true, obtained the bull, Ignorance accepted it, and it was opposed by Obstinacy. None of these things could have arisen under a prince who was capable of estimating the real value of efficacious, sufficient, or even versatile grace.

I am not surprized, that the Cardinal de Lorraine should have persecuted those weak persons who wished to bring back things to the primitive institutions of the church : the Cardinal would have been deprived of seven bishopricks, and many rich abbeys, which were in his possession. This is a good reason for persecuting those who are not of our opinion. No man surely can be more deserving of punishment, than he who would take away our revenues. This is the common occasion of war among mankind. All defend their property to the utmost of their power. But that in the very bosom of peace, intestine wars should arise from tales idle, incomprehensible, and purely

purely metaphysical; that under the dominion of Louis XIII. in the year one thousand six hundred and twenty-four, it should be forbidden, under the penalty of being sent to the galleys, to think otherwise than Aristotle; that the innate ideas of Descartes should first be anathematized, and afterwards admitted; that several subjects suited only to Rabelais, should be made questions of state; all this is barbarous and absurd.

The question has been often asked, Why the Romans never persecuted a single philosopher for his opinions from the time of Romulus till the Popes got possession of their power? The only answer to be given is—That the Romans were wise.

Cicero was a man possessed of great power. In one of his letters he says, “Consider to whom you would wish that I should procure the government of Gaul.” He was greatly attached to the Academic sect: but we do not find that he ever entertained a thought of banishing a Stoic, of excluding an Epicurean from office, or molesting a Pythagorean.

And thou, unfortunate Jurieu, an exile from thy own village, wert desirous of persecuting the exile Bayle in the place which afforded you both an asylum. Spinoza, of whom thou wert not jealous, was suffered to remain in peace; but the respectable Bayle thou wert industrious to overwhelm, because he destroyed thy trifling reputation with the lustre of his fame.

The descendant and heir to thirty kings hath said, Let us not persecute; and the burghers of a little city which is barely known, a man who is merely entitled to the rights of a parishioner, or a monk, shall say, Let us persecute.

To wrest from man his liberty of thought! Just heaven! Fanatic tyrants! You had better first cut off our hands, that we may not write; tear out our tongues that speak against you; pluck out our souls, whose thoughts of you are really horrible.

There are countries where a superstition, as abominable as it is barbarous, converts men into brutes; there are others, where the mind of man enjoys all its privileges; between these heavenly and infernal extremes, there is a people in a middle state, among whom philosophy is at one time countenanced, and at another time proscribed; where at one time Rabelais has been printed by authority, and at another, Arnauld has been suffered to perish in a distant village, and in extreme want; a people who have lived in the thickest darkness from the time of the Druids, until some lucid rays fell on them from the head of Descartes. Since that time, the day expanded itself from England. But is it to be credited, that thirty years ago this people scarcely knew the name of Locke? Will it be credited, that when the wisdom of this man was made known to them, the person who brought it from the island of philosophers into the country of frivolousness, was violently oppressed by ignorant men in office?

While those were persecuted who informed the mind, this fury was extended to those also who saved the body. It has been proved to no purpose, that inoculation might preserve yearly twenty-five thousand lives in a great kingdom; the benefactors of human nature have been treated by its enemies as public poisoners. If, unfortunately, much attention had been given them, what would have been the consequence? The neighbouring nations would have concluded, that the people were equally without reason and without courage.

It is very happy, that persecutions are only temporary, only personal; they depend on the caprice of three or four persons possessed by the devil, who see what others would never see while their understandings were uncorrupted; they cabal, they combine; a clamour is raised; the people are afterwards ashamed at having joined it, and then all is forgotten.

Per-

Perhaps a man is presumptuous enough to say, not only after all natural philosophers, but after all other men, that if God had not furnished us with hands, there would have been no artists nor arts on earth. A schoolmaster, who has been a vinegar maker, pronounces the proposition impious, on pretence, that the author attributes all things to our hands, and nothing to our intelligence. A monkey would not venture to prefer such an accusation in the country of monies. This accusation, however, has an effect among men. The author is persecuted furiously, and at the end of three months it is thought of no more. Philosophical books are, in general, like the Tales of La Fontaine: at first they were burnt, and in some time brought on the stage at the comic opera. Why have these representations been permitted? Because it was discovered, that there was nothing in them but what was laughable. Why does a book that has been prohibited, remain without injury in the hands of the reader? Because it has been found, this book was no way injurious to society; that no citizen has been deprived of a privilege by any abstracted thoughts, or any diverting fallies in it; that it has not raised the price of provisions, or prevented the wallets of the Mendicants from being crammed; that it has not in any measure disturbed the commerce of the world, and that in reality the book has only employed the leisure of a few readers.

In fact, when men persecute, it is for the pleasure of persecuting.

Let us leave the temporary oppressions which have been a thousand times inflicted on philosophy among us, and let us consider theological oppressions which are more durable. We may trace the spirit of disputation to the primitive ages, and see, that two opposite sects have always anathematized each other. Which of the two have been in the right? The strongest. Councils contend with councils, until authority and time decide; then the two parties are

united to persecute a third that rises up, and this oppresses a fourth. We know too well, that blood has been continually streaming for one thousand five hundred years, occasioned by these disputes. But men do not seem to be sufficiently sensible, that if there had been no persecution, there had been no religious war.

We should therefore repeat a thousand times with a dauphin whom we so much regret, *Let us persecute no man.*



A COM.

A
COMMENTARY
ON THE
MARQUIS BECARIA'S
TREATISE
ON
CRIMES AND PUNISHMENTS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF
MR. DE VOLTAIRE,

BY THE
REV. DAVID WILLIAMS.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR FIELDING AND WALKER, PATER-NOSTER-ROW.
MDCCLXXIX.

COMMENTARY

AND QUINCE

THE A. T. S. E.

CRIMES AND PUNISHMENTS

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF

THE A. T. S. E.



M. R.

REV. DAVID WILLIAMS

LONDON:
PRINTED BY TAYLOR AND WALTON, STATIONER-GENERAL.
1841.

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A

C O M M E N T A R Y

ON THE MARQUIS BECARIA'S TREATISE ON CRIMES
AND PUNISHMENTS.

C H A P. I.

The Occasion of this Commentary.

FULL of the satisfaction I received on reading the little Treatise on Crimes and Punishments, which is, in morality, what those few remedies are in medicine, by means of which our sufferings are alleviated; I flattered myself it would be the means of softening the remains of barbarism in the laws of some nations. I hoped for some amendment of the human race, when I was informed, that in a certain province, a girl of eighteen, had just been hanged; beautiful, well made, of useful talents, and of a very reputable family. She was guilty of having suffered herself to become with child; and besides of having abandoned that child. The unfortunate girl, flying from her father's house, was seized by the pains of labour; and was delivered alone, and without assistance, near
a foun-

a fountain. Shame, which is a powerful passion in the sex, gave her strength to return to the house of her father, and to conceal her condition. She left her child exposed. The next morning it was found dead; the mother was discovered, condemned, and executed.

The first fault of this girl should have been buried as a secret in her family; or rather, it should have been protected by the laws; because it was incumbent on her seducer to repair the injury he had committed; because weakness has a claim to indulgence; because every thing speaks in favour of a person, who by concealing her pregnancy, often endangers her life; because by declaring her condition, she would have ruined her reputation; and because the difficulty of bringing up her child would have been an addition to her misfortunes.

The second fault was more criminal. She abandoned the fruit of her frailty, and exposed it to perish.

But, because a child is dead, must the mother also be put to death? She had not killed the child. She flattered herself, that the innocent creature would excite the compassion of some passenger. It is possible she might have intended to return, and to afford it all necessary assistance. This is a sentiment so natural, that it ought to be presumed in the heart of a mother. Indeed, the law, in the province I speak of, was directly against her. But was it not unjust, inhuman and pernicious? Unjust, because it did not distinguish between a woman who kills her child, and one who abandons it; inhuman, because it cruelly puts to death an unfortunate person, who could be charged only with frailty, and with too great a desire to conceal her misfortune; pernicious, because it has robbed society of a citizen, who should have furnished subjects to the state, in a province, where complaints are made of depopulation.

Charity

Charity has not yet erected hospitals in this country, where exposed infants may be brought up; and where charity is wanting, the law is always cruel. It would be much better to prevent those misfortunes, which so often occur, than to content ourselves with punishing them. Real jurisprudence consists in preventing crimes, and not in inflicting death on a feeble sex; when it is evident, that faults have not been accompanied with malice, and that they have cost the heart not a little.

Insure, as much as you can, a resource to those who may be tempted to evil; and you will have little to punish.

CHAP. II.

Of Punishments.

I WAS so much affected by this misfortune, and this severe law, as to be induced to cast my eyes on the criminal code of all nations. The humane author of the Essay on Crimes and Punishments, had but too much reason to complain, that punishments often exceeded crimes, and were injurious to the state which they should have benefited.

Those studied punishments, where the human mind exerted its utmost endeavours to render death horrible, seem to be rather the inventions of tyranny than of justice.

It was in times of anarchy, that the punishment of the wheel was first introduced in Germany; when those who seized the royal power, determined, by the apparatus of extraordinary torments, to terrify those who might dispute their authority. In England, they ripped up the belly of a man guilty of high-treason, plucked out his heart, threw it in his teeth, and then committed it to the flames. And in
what

what did this high treason frequently consist? In adhering, during a civil war, to an unfortunate king; or in speaking too plainly on the doubtful claims of a conqueror. In time, these manners were meliorated. The English continue to tear out the heart; but not till after the death of the traitor. The apparatus is dreadful; but the death is mild, if death can be ever said to be mild.

CHAP. III.

Of Punishments in Cases of Heresy.

IT seems to be an act of peculiar tyranny to condemn those to death, who in certain dogmas differ from the ruling religion. The tyrant Maximus was the first Christian emperor, who thought of condemning a man to death, merely for points of controversy. Indeed it is true, that two Spanish bishops, in the reign of Maximus, persecuted the Priscilianists; but it is no less true, that this tyrant only meant to gratify the reigning party with the blood of heretics. Barbarity and justice were to him equally indifferent. He was jealous of Theodosius, a Spaniard like himself; and endeavoured to take from him the empire of the East, in the same manner that he obtained the empire of the West. The cruelties of Theodosius had rendered him hateful; but he had found out the reason of attaching to his party all the leaders of the ruling religion. Maximus was desirous of displaying the same zeal, and of drawing the Spanish bishops to his faction. He flattered both the old and the new religion. He was as perfidious as he was inhuman; so indeed at that time, were all those who either made pretensions to, or were in possession of the empire. That vast part of the empire

was governed at that time, as Algiers is at present. The army created and dethroned their emperors; and sometimes chose them from nations reputed barbarous. Theodosius brought against Maximus the barbarians of Scythia. He was the first who filled his army with Goths, and surprised Alaric, the conqueror of Rome. In this dreadful confusion, every man endeavoured to increase the strength of his party by all means in his power.

The Emperor Gratian, colleague to Theodosius, having been assassinated at Lyons by the order of Maximus, the next person to be destroyed, was Valentinian the Second, who in his infancy had been named at Rome successor to Gratian. He ordered troops to be raised in Spain, where two Spanish bishops (Idacio and Ithacus, or Itacius) who were persons of great influence, came and demanded, that Priscilian and his adherents should be put to death, because they were of opinion, that souls were emanations from God; that the Trinity did not contain three hypostases; and because they carried their impiety so far as even to fast on Sundays. Maximus, half Pagan and half Christian, immediately saw the atrociousness of these crimes. The holy Bishops Idacio and Itacius, obtained his permission to put Priscilian and his adherents to the torture, and then to death. The two bishops were present, that things might be done in order, and they returned, praising God, and placing Maximus, the defender of their faith, among the saints. But Maximus being defeated afterwards by Theodosius, and assassinated at the feet of his conqueror, was not canonised.

It may be proper to observe, that St. Martin, bishop of Tours, who was in fact a good man, endeavoured to obtain Priscilian's pardon. But the bishops accused him of heresy; and he returned to Tours, lest he should be put to the torture at Treves.

All the consolation Priscilian had, was that of being honoured by his followers as a martyr, after having

ing been hanged. There was a festival instituted to his memory ; and if there were any Priscilianists, it would still be celebrated.

This example made the whole church tremble. But it was soon imitated and improved upon. The followers of Priscilian were put to death by the sword, the halter, and by being stoned. A young lady of quality, at Bourdeaux, was only stoned to death, on suspicion of having fasted on a Sunday.* But these punishments seemed not sufficiently severe ; it was proved to be the will of God, that heretics should be roasted at a slow fire. The decisive argument in favour of the opinion was, that God meant to punish them in the same manner in a future world ; and that every prince, every viceroy, nay, the lowest magistrate, is the image of God upon earth.

It was upon this principle throughout the world that they burnt forcerers who were evidently under the dominion of the Devil, and heterodox Christians who were considered as more criminal and more dangerous.

The heresy of those priests is not certainly known who were burnt at Orleans, in the presence of King Robert and his Queen Constantia, in the year 1022. Indeed how is it possible it should be known to us ? At that time there was but a small number of clerks and monks who could write. All that we are sure of is, that Robert and his queen feasted their eyes with the abominable spectacle. One of the secretaries had been confessor to Constantia ; and that queen thought she could not better remedy the injury of having confessed to a heretic, than by seeing that he was consumed by the flames.

Custom becomes law : and from that time to the present, which is more than seven hundred years, the church has continued to burn those who have,

* See the History of the Church.

or who are even supposed to have tarnished themselves by erroneous opinions.

CHAP. IV.

On the Extirpation of Heresy.

IT is necessary we should distinguish error of opinion from faction. Men have differed in their opinions from the very first ages of Christianity. The Christians of Alexandria differed in their opinions on many articles from those of Antioch. The Achaïans differed from the Asiatics. This difference took place from the beginning and will probably remain. Jesus Christ did not unite the faithful in the same opinion, though he had it in his power; we may therefore infer it was not his design; but that he chose his churches should exercise acts of candour and charity, and permitted different systems to those who should agree only in acknowledging him their lord and master. All these sects while they were tolerated by the emperors, or concealed from them, had it not in their power to persecute each other; they could only dispute. When the magistrates persecuted them, they claimed, as other men would, the privileges of nature. "Suffer us," they said, "to adore our God in peace, and do not refuse us the same liberty which you grant the Jews." All sects at this time might hold the same language to those who persecute them. They might say to those who have allowed privileges to the Jews, "Treat us as you do the children of Jacob. Let us, as they do, pray to God according to our consciences. The state will no more be injured by our opinions than it is by Judaism. They enemies of Jesus Christ are to-

H

"tolerated

“lerated by you ; tolerate us also who adore him,
“and who differ from you only in theological subtil-
“ties. Do not deprive yourselves of useful subjects ;
“you want them in your manufactories, in your ma-
“rine, and in the cultivation of your lands. Can
“it be of any importance that their creed should be
“in some little things different from yours ? You
“want the labour of their hands and not their cate-
“chism.”

Faction is a thing of a very different nature. It happens always, that a sect which is persecuted, degenerates into a faction. Those who are oppressed naturally unite and animate each other ; and generally use more industry in adding to the strength of their party, than their persecutors do in endeavours to exterminate them. They must either destroy or be destroyed. It was the case in the two last years of Diocletian, after the persecution excited by Galerius in 304. The Christians having been favoured by Diocletian for eighteen years, were too numerous and too rich to be exterminated. They joined Constantius Chlorus ; they fought for his son Constantine ; and the consequence was an entire revolution in the empire.

Little occurrences may be compared with great, when produced by a similar spirit. Revolutions of the same kind took place in Holland, in Scotland, and in Switzerland. When the Jews were driven out of Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella, where they had been established not only before the family on the throne, but before the Moors, the Goths, or even the Carthaginians ; the Jews might easily have effected a revolution, if they had been as warlike as they were wealthy, or if they could have united their interest with that of the Arabians.

In a word, the government of a country has never been changed by any sect, until despair has furnished that sect with arms. Mahomed himself was suc-
cessful

cessful only because he was driven from Mecca, and a reward set on his head.

If you would prevent a sect from overturning the state, be tolerant; imitate the wise examples of England, Germany and Holland. The only methods to be taken with a new sect, consistent with true policy, are either to put to death the leader and his adherents, men, women and children, without sparing an individual; or to tolerate the whole sect when consisting of numbers. The first method would be taken by a monster, and the second by a wise man.

Attach your subjects to the state by their interests. Let the Quaker and the Turk find their advantage in living under your laws. Religion is the law of God to man; the civil law is yours to your people.

CHAP. V.

Profanations.

LOUIS IX. king of France, who was numbered among the saints on account of his virtues, made a law against blasphemers in the commencement of his reign. He condemned them to a new kind of punishment; for their tongues were bored through with a hot iron. It was meant as retaliation; the punishment being inflicted on the offending member. But it was rather difficult to decide what was blasphemy. Expressions often escape a man in a passion, in joy, or even in conversation, which are merely expletive; such are the *selah* and the *vab* of the Hebrews; the *pol* and *ædepol* of the Latins; and even the *per Deos immortales* was a phrase often used without the least intention of swearing by the immortal gods.

Those words called blasphemies and oaths are in general of uncertain signification, and may be variously interpreted. The law by which they are punished seems to be founded upon that of the Jews, which says, *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain*. It is the opinion of the best commentators that this commandment was intended to prevent perjury; and there is the more reason to believe them right, as the word *shavè* which is translated in vain, properly signifies perjury. Now what analogy can there be between perjury and the words which are softened in *cadedis, sangbleu, ventrebleu, corbleu, &c?*

It was a custom among the Jews to swear by the life of God, *vivit Dominus*; it was a common formula; so that it was when they gave evidence, they were forbidden to lie in the name of the Lord.

Philip Augustus, in 1181, ordained the nobility should pay a fine who should use the terms *tetebleu, ventrebleu, corbleu, sangbleu*; and that the plebeians offending in the same manner should be drowned. The first part of the law was puerile; the latter was horrible. It was an outrage on nature, to drown one man for a crime for which another only paid a few pence of the money of those times. The law therefore, like many others, remained ineffectual, particularly when the king was excommunicated, and his kingdom laid under an interdict by Pope Celestine III.

Transported with zeal, St. Louis commanded that all without distinction who pronounced these indecent words, should have their tongues bored, or their upper lips cut off. A citizen of Paris having suffered this punishment, complained to Pope Innocent IV. The pontiff remonstrated to the king that the punishment was too severe for the crime. The king never exercised the same severity. It would have been happy for mankind if the Popes had never assumed any other superiority over kings.

The

The ordinance of Louis XIV. in 1666, says,—
 “Those who are convicted of blaspheming or swear-
 “ing by the holy name of God, of his most holy
 “mother, or of his saints, shall pay a fine for the
 “first offence; a double, triple, quadruple fine for
 “the second, third and fourth offence; shall be
 “put into the stocks for the fifth; shall stand in
 “the pillory and lose his upper lip for the sixth;
 “and for the seventh shall have his tongue cut out.”

There is some humanity and justice in this law, as it does not inflict a punishment until the offence is committed seven times, which is not likely to be done.

But on the subject of atrocious profanations, which are called sacrileges, the criminal ordinance mentions only robbing churches; it does not take notice of public impieties; it was not perhaps imagined they could come to pass, or it was too difficult to specify them. They are therefore left to the discretion of the judge; but nothing should be left to discretion.

In extraordinary cases of this nature, how is the judge to act? The considerations which should weigh with him, are the age of the offender, the nature and degree of his guilt, and particularly the necessity of a public example. *Pro qualitate personæ, proque rei conditione & temporis & ætatis & sexus, vel severius vel clementias statuendum.* If it be not expressly declared in the law that any specified crime shall be punished with death, what judge would think himself authorized to pass the sentence? Where the law is silent, and a punishment is necessary, the judge, because he is a man, ought certainly not to hesitate in pronouncing the mildest sentence.

Hardly any but young debauchées ever commit profanations of a sacrilegious kind. Would you punish them on such occasions with as much severity as if they had murdered a brother? Their youth is a

circumstance in their favour. They are not permitted to dispose of their estates; because it is supposed that their judgment is not sufficiently mature to perceive the consequences of a rash transaction. Is it not, therefore, natural to suppose, they have not sufficient judgment to perceive the consequences of their impiety?

Would you adjudge the same severe punishment to a giddy youth, who, in a kind of frenzy, had profaned a sacred image, but who had not stolen it, as to a Brinvillers who poisoned his father and his whole family?

There is no express law against the unfortunate youth; and you determine to make one, in order to inflict on him the severest punishment. He deserved to be chastised; but was it necessary to inflict such tortures as would make nature revolt, or to put him to the most horrible death?

But he has offended God. No doubt, and very highly. Imitate God in your conduct towards him. On his repentance God forgives him. Enjoin a penance and let him be forgiven.

The illustrious Montesquieu says, "Our duty is to honour the Deity, not to revenge him." Let us thoroughly consider these words. It is not their meaning that we should neglect the support of public decorum; but as the judicious author of the *Essay on Crimes and Punishments* observes, that it is ridiculous in an insect to take upon him to revenge the Supreme Being. A village or a city magistrate is not a Moses or a Joshua.

CHAP. VI.

The Indulgence of the Romans in these Matters.

THE surprising contrast between the laws of the Romans and those barbarous usages which were seen to succeed them, as filth is seen to occupy the place of a superb city, has been often the subject of conversation among all those who are well informed throughout Europe.

It is certain, that the Roman senate held the Supreme God in as great veneration as we do; and professed as much regard for their immortal and secondary deities depending on their eternal master, as we do for our saints. *Ab Jove principium*, was their common formulary. Pliny,* in his panegyric on the good Trajan, says, the Romans never neglected to begin their discourse or to enter on their affairs by invoking the Deity. Cicero and Livy attest the same thing. No people were more religious; but they were too wise and too great to descend to the punishment of idle words or philosophical opinions; they were not capable of condemning those to cruel punishments who, like Cicero, had his doubts on auguries, though himself an augur; or those who, like Cæsar in full senate, declared the gods do not punish men after death.

It has been a hundred times taken notice of, that the senate permitted the chorus in one of Seneca's plays to sing, "There is nothing after death, and death itself is nothing. You ask what becomes of the dead? "Where were they before their birth?"

* *Bene ac sapienter patres conscripti majores instituerunt ut rerum agendarum ita dicendi initium a precationibus cepere, &c.*

If there was ever a profanation which may be deemed flagrant, this must be one. From Ennius to Aufonius all is profaneness, notwithstanding the general respect for the public worship. Why did not the senate suppress these things? Because the government of the state was not in the least affected by them; because they disturbed no institution, no ceremony of religion. The police of the Romans was not the less excellent on this account; nor were they prevented from being masters of the finest part of the world, until the reign of Theodosius II.

It was a maxim among the Romans, *Deorum offensæ Diis curæ*; *Offences against the gods are the concerns of the gods*. The senate being at the head of religion, by an institution extremely wise, were never apprehensive that a college of priests would oblige them to revenge the order, under pretence of revenging heaven. They never said, Let us destroy the impious, lest we should be considered as impious ourselves; let us shew the priests by our cruelty, that we are as religious as themselves.

But our religion is more holy than that of the Romans, and therefore impiety is a greater crime. God will punish it. The duty of man is to punish that which is criminal in the public confusion occasioned by impiety. Now if in any impious transaction, the criminal has not even stolen a handkerchief; if no man has received the least injury; if the rites of religion have not been in the least disturbed; shall we (for I must repeat it) punish impiety as we would parricide? The Marshal D'Ancre commanded a white cock to be killed while the moon was full; does it therefore follow, that we should burn Marshal D'Ancre?

*Est modus in rebus, sunt certi denique fines;
Nec scutica dignum horribili scelerè flagello.*

C H A P. VII.

Of the Crime of Preaching, and of Anthony.

A CALVINIST preacher who comes secretly and preaches to his flock in certain provinces, when detected, is punished with death, and those who have given him a supper or a bed, are sent to the galleys for life. In other countries, a Jesuit coming to preach, is hanged. Is this Calvinist or this Jesuit put to death in order to avenge Almighty God? And have both parties derived their authority to punish on the following evangelic law, "If he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen-man and a publican." But the Evangelist does not enjoin that the heathen-man or the publican should be hanged.

Or have they derived it from that passage of Deuteronomy, (Chap. xxiii.) "If a prophet arise among you; and that which he hath said come to pass; and he sayeth unto you, Let us follow strange gods; and if thy brother, or thy son, or thy wife, or the friend of thy heart, say unto thee, Come let us follow strange gods; let them be straightways killed; strike thou first, and all the people after thee." But neither the Jesuit nor the Calvinist said unto you, Come let us follow strange gods.

The Counsellor Dubourg, and the Canon Jehan Chavin, called Calvin; the Spanish physician Servetus, the Calabrian Gentilis, all adored the same God, and yet the president Minard caused the counsellor Dubourg to be burnt; and the friends of Dubourg assassinated the president Minard. John Calvin caused the physician Servetus to be burnt at a slow fire, and had also the consolation to be the principal means of bringing the Calabrian Gentilis to the block; and the

suc-

successors of John Calvin committed Anthony to the flames. Were these murders committed by reason, piety, or justice?

The history of Anthony is one of the most extraordinary of any which have been preserved in the annals of madness. I have read the following account of him in a very curious manuscript. Something like it may be found in the works of Jacob Spon.

Anthony was born at Brieu in Lorrain; his parents were Catholics, and he was educated by the Jesuits at Pont à Mousson. The preacher Feri, at Metz, induced him to embrace the Protestant religion. On his return to Nanci, he was persecuted as a heretick; and if a friend had not exerted himself to save him, he would have been hanged. He sought an asylum at Sedan, where he was suspected to be a Roman Catholic, and with difficulty escaped assassination.

Seeing, that by some strange fatality, his life was in danger among Papists and Protestants, he went to Venice and turned Jew. He was thoroughly convinced, even to the last moments of his life, that the Jewish religion alone was authentic; for, he observed, if it was once the true religion, it must be always so. The Jews did not circumcise him, lest they should have some difference with the magistrates; but he was inwardly a Jew. He went to Geneva, where he concealed his faith, became a preacher, a president in a college, and at last what is called a minister.

The perpetual contention in his mind between the religion of Calvin, which he was under a necessity of preaching, and that of Moses, the religion he believed in, occasioned a long illness. He grew melancholy, and becoming quite mad, he often cried out in his paroxysms, that he was a Jew. The ministers came to visit him, and tried to restore him to his senses; but he continually said, that he adored none but the God of Israel; that it was not possible God should change; that he could never have given a law, and written it with his own hand, intending that it should be abolished.

lished. He spoke to the disadvantage of Christianity; and afterwards retracted what he had said, and even delivered up a confession of faith to escape punishment; but after having written it, the unfortunate persuasion of his heart would not suffer him to sign it. The council of the city assembled the preachers to consider what was to be done with the unfortunate Anthony. The smaller number of those preachers, were of opinion that he should be pitied, and that some attempts should be made to cure his disease, rather than punish him. The greater number determined he should be burnt, and he was burnt accordingly. This transaction is of the year 1632.* A hundred years of reason and virtue are hardly sufficient to atone for such a determination.

C H A P. VIII.

History of Simon Morin.

THE tragic end of Simon Morin was not less horrible than that of Anthony. It was amidst the feasting, pleasures and gallantry of a brilliant court; it was in times of the greatest licentiousness, that this unfortunate madman was burnt at Paris in the year 1663. He was an idiot, and imagined he saw visions; he carried his folly so far, as to believe he was sent from God, and that he was incorporated with Jesus Christ.

The Parliament prudently condemned him to be confined in a mad-house. What was remarkable, there happened to be in the same house another idiot, who called himself the Eternal Father. Simon Morin was so struck with the folly of his companion, that he saw his own, and appeared for a time to have recover-

* Jacob Spon, p. 500, and Guy Vances.

ed his senses. He declared his repentance to the magistrate, and unfortunately for himself obtained his liberty. He relapsed soon after into his former nonsense and dogmatized. His unhappy destiny brought him acquainted with St. Sorlin Desmarets, who for many months was his friend, and who afterwards, from a jealousy of his reputation, became his most cruel persecutor.

This Desmarets was no less a visionary than Morin. His first follies indeed were innocent. He printed the tragi-comedies of Erigone and Mirame with the translation of the Psalms; the romance of Ariane, and the poem of Clovis, with the office of the Holy Virgin turned into verse. He also published dithyrambic poems, containing invectives against Homer and Virgil. From such follies he proceeded to others of a more serious nature. He attacked Port-royal; and after confessing that he had converted some women to atheism, he commenced prophet. He pretended God had given him with his own hand the key of the Apocalypse; that with this key he would reform the whole world, and that he should command an army of an hundred and forty thousand men against the Jansenists.

It would have been very reasonable and just to have confined him with Simon Morin; but can it be believed, that he found credit with the Jesuit Annat, confessor to the king? He persuaded him, that poor Simon would establish a sect almost as dangerous as the Jansenists themselves. In short, becoming so abandoned as to turn informer, he procured an order to seize the person of his rival. Shall I tell it? Simon Morin was condemned to be burnt alive!

When he was led to the stake, a paper was found in one of his stockings, begging forgiveness of God for all his errors. This should have saved him. No: his sentence was confirmed, and he was executed without mercy.

Such

Such actions make one's hair stand an end with horror. But where is the country that has not beheld such deplorable events? Mankind universally forget they are brethren, and persecute each other even to death. Let us console ourselves with the hope, that such horrid times are passed, never more to return.

CHAP. IX.

Of Sorcerers.

IN the year 1748, an old woman was convicted of sorcery, and committed to the flames in the bishopric of Wurzburg. It was an extraordinary phenomenon in the present century. But how improbable must it be, that a people who boasted of their reformation, of having trampled superstition under foot, and flattering themselves that they had improved their reason to a great degree of perfection—how improbable must it appear, that such people should have believed in witchcraft, should have committed to the flames some poor women accused of this crime, and that above a hundred years after the pretended reformation of their understandings?

In the year 1652, a country woman of the little territory of Geneva, whose name was Michelle Chaudron, met the devil as she was going out of the city. The devil gave her a kiss, received her homage, and imprinted the marks he usually bestows on his favorites on her upper lip, and on her right breast. This seal of Satan is a little spot on the skin, which renders it insensible; as all the demonographical civilians of those times have assured us.

Michelle Chaudron was commanded by the devil to bewitch two young women, which she did with great

punctuality. The parents of the young women accused Michelle Chaudron of corresponding with the devil. The young women being confronted with the accused, declared they were possessed, because they felt a constant prickling in some parts of their bodies. Physicians were sent for; at least, such persons as in those times passed for physicians. They visited the patients; and searched for the devil's seals on the body of Michelle; which seals, in the verbal process, are called Satanical marks. They plunged a long needle into one of those marks; which was in itself no small torment. Blood flowed from the wound; and Michelle, by her cries, shewed that the part was not without feeling. Not finding proper proofs in this way, that Michelle was a forcerefs, the judges commanded she should be put to the torture; which could not fail to produce the proof which they stood in need of. The poor creature, overwhelmed with torment, at last confessed all they wished.

The physicians searched again for the Satanical mark; and found it in a little black spot on one of her thighs. The poor wretch overcome, and almost expiring with the torture of the rack, was insensible to the needle, and did not cry out. Thus the crime was ascertained. But the world beginning at this time to be a little civilised, she was hanged and strangled, before she was committed to the flames.

At this time, every tribunal in Europe echoed with such judgments, and fire and faggot were universally employed against sorcery as well as heresy. The Turks were reproached for having among them neither forcerers nor demoniacs; and their not having the latter was considered as a certain proof, that their religion was not true.

A warm friend to the public interest, to humanity, and to real religion, informs us, in one of his works in behalf of innocence, that Christian tribunals have condemned to death above a hundred thousand witches. If to these legal massacres, we add the

much greater number of heretics which have been sacrificed; our division of the globe will appear to be one large scaffold crouded with executioners and victims, and surrounded by judges, guards, and spectators.

CHAP. X.

On the Punishment of Death.

IT has been observed, long since, that a man is not good for any thing after he is hanged; and that punishments, which are invented for the benefit of society, should be useful to society. It cannot be disputed, that twenty robust criminals, condemned to some public work for life, would in their punishment be of service to the community; and that hanging them is an advantage only to the executioner, who is paid for putting men publicly to death. In England thieves are not often put to death; they are transported to the colonies. In the vast territories of Russia, something like this is the case; for not one criminal was executed during the whole reign of the Empress Elizabeth. Her successor, Catherine II. with a finer genius, follows her example. And yet crimes are not multiplied by this humanity. Nay, it generally comes to pass, that the convicts sent to Siberia, become in time honest men. The same thing is to be seen in the English colonies. We are astonished at the happy change; and yet nothing can be more natural. The convicts are obliged to constant labour to obtain a livelihood. They have no opportunity of running into vices. They marry, and they furnish the community with people. Put men under a necessity of working, and you certainly make them honest. We very well know, that enormous

mous crimes are not committed in the country, unless it be where there are too many festivals, which oblige men to be idle, and lead them into debauchery.

The Romans never condemned a citizen to death: but for crimes which affected the security of the commonwealth. These people, who were our masters, our first legislators, were frugal of the blood of their fellow citizens; but we are lavish of the blood of ours.

Whether a judge should have the power of punishing with death, when the punishment is not specified by law, is a delicate and important question, which has been often debated. It was solemnly argued before the Emperor Henry VII. who was of opinion, that no judge should have such a power.*

There are some criminal cases, which are so new, so complicated, or accompanied with circumstances so unaccountable, as to have escaped the notice of the laws; which, therefore, in some countries are left to the prudence of the judge. But for one case in which the laws allow the death of a criminal, whom they have not condemned, there are a thousand in which humanity, which should be superior to the laws, might save those whom the laws have ordered to be punished.

The sword of justice is in our hands; but we ought rather to blunt, than to whet the edge of it. It is carried before kings within its sheath, to inform us it should be drawn but seldom.

There have been judges who were extremely fond of shedding human blood; such was Jefferies in England; and such was the man whom they called Coupe Tete in France. Such men were not intended for magistrates. Nature designed them for executioners.

* Bodin de Republica, lib. iii. c. 5.

C H A P. XI.

Of the Execution of Warrants.

MUST we go to the very extremities, of the world; must we have recourse to the laws of China, to learn how sparing we should be of human blood?

It is now more than four thousand years since the tribunals of that empire have been held; and since the custom has prevailed not to execute the meanest subject in the remotest corners of it, without first transmitting his case to the emperor, who orders it to be examined three times by one of his tribunals; after which, he either signs the sentence, changes it, or acquits the person accused.*

But we need not seek examples at such a distance, Europe will sufficiently furnish us. No criminal is put to death in England, whose sentence is not signed by the king. This is the case in Germany, and in most parts of the north. It was formerly the custom in France; and it should ever be so in all nations who would be well governed. At a distance from the throne, a sentence may be suggested by cabal, by prejudice, or by ignorance. Such little intrigues make no impression on courts, which are continually engaged

* The author of the Spirit of Laws, who has scattered so many beautiful truths through his work, seems to have been deceived, when (to establish his principle, that the vague sentiment of honor is the foundation of monarchies, and virtue of republics) he says of the Chinese, "I know not what sentiment of honor can be entertained by a people, who are forced to every action by blows." It may be true, that the populace may often be dispersed by the cane; or that blows may be given to insolent beggars and knaves: but does it follow, that China is not governed by tribunals, which watch over each other; or that it has not an excellent form of government?

by great objects. The members of the supreme council are more attentive to public business, and less liable to prejudice; the habit of considering things with enlarged views has rendered them less ignorant, and given them more wisdom; and they can determine better than a provincial judge, whether the state requires severe punishments. In short, when inferior courts have judged according to the letter, which may be rigorous, the council softens the sentence, according to the spirit of all laws, which requires, that a man should never be sacrificed but in cases of extreme necessity.

CHAP. XII.

On the Custom of putting Criminals to the Torture.

ALL men being exposed to the attempts of violence or of perfidy, hold those crimes in abhorrence, of which they may be the victims. All unite in desiring the punishment of principal offenders and their accomplices; all, however, by a compassion which God has implanted in our hearts, abhor those tortures inflicted on criminals in order to extort their confession. The law has not condemned them, and yet in a state of uncertainty with regard to their crime, a punishment is inflicted on them much more dreadful, than that which they are made to suffer even when their guilt is proved. "How! I am yet ignorant of thy guilt; and I will put thee to the torture in order to inform myself; and if I see thou art innocent, I shall make thee no satisfaction for the thousand deaths I make thee suffer, instead of that which was prepared for thee." Every man must shudder at this idea. It is not necessary I should say that St. Augustine opposed himself to such cruelty in his book *De Civitate Dei*. It is not necessary to observe, that the Romans never put to the torture

ture any but their slaves ; and that Quintilian, on the principle that even slaves were men, severely reprov'd such barbarity.

If there were but one nation in the world which had abolished the custom of putting men to the torture ; if crimes were not in greater numbers in that nation than in any other ; and if that nation be more enlightened and more flourishing since that abolition, its example ought to influence the whole world. England alone would instruct all the other nations. But it is not in England alone, but in all other nations, that the torture has been proscribed, and with great success. Every thing on this question is therefore decided. Shall not a people who pique themselves on being polite, value themselves also on being humane ? Shall they obstinately persevere in an inhuman practice, on the single pretext of custom ? At least, reserve such cruelties for those avowed villains who have assassinated the father of a family, or the father of his country ; punish even his accomplices : but to inflict the torments due to a parricide, on a young person who commits a fault which leaves no traces behind it ;—is not this barbarity useless ?

I am ashamed of having spoken on this subject, after what has been said by the author of the *Essay on Crimes and Punishments*. I ought to have contented myself with wishing, that men would read repeatedly and often, the work of that friend to humanity.

C H A P. XIII.

Of some sanguinary Tribunals.

IS it to be credited, that there existed formerly a supreme tribunal more horrible than the Inquisition, and that it was established by Charlemagne? It was the judgment of Westphalia; otherwise called the *Vhemick court*. The severity, or rather cruelty, of this court was such, as to punish with death every Saxon who broke his fast during Lent. The same law was established in Flanders and in Franche Comté at the commencement of the seventeenth century.

The archives of a little district called St. Claude, situated in the most frightful rocks of the province of Burgundy, have preserved the sentence, the verbal process and execution, of an unfortunate gentleman called Claude Guillon, who was beheaded on the 28th of July, 1629. He had been reduced to poverty, and was almost dying with hunger. On a meagre day, he eat a morsel of the flesh, which had been killed in a neighbouring field. This was his crime. He was condemned for sacrilege. If he had been a rich man, and had spent two hundred crowns in sea-fish at a supper, while he suffered the poor to die of hunger, he would have been considered as a man who fulfilled all his duties. The following is the sentence pronounced by his judge; "After having seen all the papers of the process, and having heard the opinions of doctors in the law, we declare the said Claude Guillon duly attainted and convicted of having taken away the flesh of a horse, which had been killed in the meadow of the city; of having caused the said flesh to be dressed on Saturday the 31st of March; of having eaten the same, &c."

What

What doctors these doctors of laws must have been, who gave this opinion! Was it among the Topinambous or among the Hottentots that these adventures have come to pass? The *Vbemick court* was still more horrible; commissaries were secretly delegated from it, who went without being known into all the cities of Germany, took informations without the knowledge of the accused, who were condemned without being heard; and when they stood in need of an executioner, the youngest judge often performed the office himself.* In order to be secure from the assassinations of this court, it was necessary to procure letters of safety and exemption from the emperor, and even these were often useless. This court of murderers was not entirely dissolved but by Maximilian I. It ought to have been sunk in the blood of its judges. The tribunal of ten at Venice was in comparison of this, an institution of mercy.

What are we to think of these, and many other horrible proceedings? Is it sufficient to sigh over human nature? There have been cases which required vengeance.

C H A P. XIV.

Of the Difference between political and natural Laws.

I CALL those laws natural, which nature has dictated in all ages and to all men, for the support of that justice, which (whatever we may say of her) she hath implanted in our hearts. Theft, violence, homicide, ingratitude to beneficent parents, perjury to injure and not to succour innocence, conspiracies to destroy one's country: these are crimes which, though pu-

* See the excellent abridgement of the Chronological History and Public Laws of Germany, in the year 803.

nished with more or less severity, are yet punished universally and with justice.

I call those laws political, which were made for present necessity, whether to give stability to power, or to prevent calamities. For example: when apprehensive that an enemy may receive intelligence from the inhabitants of a city, the gates are shut, and every man is forbidden to pass the ramparts on pain of death.

Or if a new sect should publicly profess obedience to their sovereign, and secretly consult on means to throw off that obedience; should preach, that all men are equal, in order to subject them equally to new rites; that God is to be obeyed rather than man; who accuse the reigning sect of superstition and ridiculous ceremonies, and mean to destroy that religion which is consecrated by the state; those are condemned to death, who, in publicly dogmatizing in favour of such a sect, would rouse the people to revolt.

Or if two ambitious princes should dispute the crown; the strongest gaining the prize, punishes the partizans of the weaker with death. The judges become instruments of vengeance in the hands of the new sovereign, and the supporters of his authority. Any person under Hugh Capet having the misfortune to be allied to Charles of Lorraine, was in danger of being condemned, unless he was very powerful.

When Richard III. who had murdered his two nephews, was acknowledged king of England, the jury condemned Sir William Collinburn to be quartered for having written to a friend of the Duke of Richmond, who was raising an army, and who afterwards reigned by the name of Henry VII. They found two lines written by Sir William which were very ridiculous, but they served to condemn him to an horrible death. History is full of such examples of justice.

The right of reprisal is also a law adopted by all nations. For example: your enemy has hanged one of your brave captains, because he defended an old ruined castle against an whole army. One of the enemy's

my's captains falls into your hands. He is a worthy man, and you would esteem and love him; you hang him, however, by way of reprisal. You say it is law; that is, because your enemy has been guilty of an enormous crime, you must be guilty of one as enormous.

These bloody political laws exist only for a time; because they are not real and useful laws they are discontinued. They resemble the necessity, which in cases of extreme famine obliges people to eat each other; as soon as they can obtain bread they cease to devour men.

CHAP. XV.

Of the Crime of High Treason; of Titus Oates; and of the Death of Augustine de Thou.

THAT crime is called high treason, by which an attempt is made on the security of the state, or of the king who represents it. This is regarded as a kind of parricide; the guilt of it therefore ought not to be extended to offences which have no relation to that crime; for if a robbery in a house belonging to the state be considered as treason; or if a public commotion, or seditious words be considered in the same light, that horror with which the crime of high treason should be treated is wholly taken away.

There should be nothing arbitrary in the ideas which we form of great crimes. If a robbery committed by a son on his father, or an imprecation against him, be placed in the rank of parricides, the bond of filial piety is broken. The son cannot regard his father but as a terrible monster. Every thing excessive in laws has a tendency to destroy them.

In ordinary crimes, the law of England is favourable to the accused; but is quite otherwise in cases of

high treason. The Jesuit Titus Oates had been legally interrogated in the house of commons, and had sworn he had nothing farther to discover; yet he afterwards accused the Duke of York, his Secretary, and many other persons of high treason, and his information was admitted. He first swore before the king's council, that he had not seen the Secretary, and afterwards he swore he had seen him. Notwithstanding these illegal proceedings, and these contradictions, the Secretary was executed.

The same Oates and another witness swore that fifty Jesuits had conspired to assassinate Charles II. and that they had seen a commission from father Oliva, general of the Jesuits, to those officers who were to command an army of rebels. Those two witnesses were sufficient to justify the punishment of tearing out the hearts, and dashing them in the faces of several persons. But in truth, are two witnesses sufficient to occasion the death of those whom they are willing to destroy? At least it should be clear, that those two witnesses are not avowed villains, and that their depositions be not improbable.

It is certain, that if two of the most upright magistrates in the kingdom were to swear, that a man had conspired with the Musti to circumcise the whole council of state, the parliament the chamber of accompts, the archbishop, and the sorbonne, they would swear in vain, that they had seen the letters of the Musti; it would rather be supposed, they were out of their senses, than that any credit was due to their deposition. It was altogether as extravagant to suppose, that the general of the Jesuits should raise an army in England, as it would be to believe, that the Musti would send to circumcise the court of France. Titus Oates, however, was unfortunately believed, that there might be no species of atrocious folly which had not entered the head of man.

The laws of England do not consider as guilty of a conspiracy those who are acquainted with it, and
do

do not inform. They deem the informer as infamous, as the conspirator is culpable. In France, those who are privy to a conspiracy, and do not reveal it, are put to death. Louis XI. against whom there were frequent conspiracies, made this terrible law; which a Louis XII. or a Henry IV. would never have imagined. This law not only obliges an honest man to divulge a crime, which might possibly have been prevented by his sage council and resolution; but it exposes him to the danger of being punished as a calumniator, because it is very easy for those who are accused to take their measures in such a manner as to elude conviction.

This was precisely the case of the truly respectable Augustine de Thou, a counsellor of state, and son of the only good historian which France can value herself upon; equal to Guicciardini in regard to information, and perhaps superior in impartiality.

A conspiracy was formed rather against Cardinal de Richelieu than against Louis XIII. It was not the intention to betray France to the enemy; for the king's brother, who was a principal contriver of the plot, could not well design to betray a kingdom to which he was presumptive heir; as there were between him and the throne, only an elder brother, who was dying, and two children in the cradle.

De Thou was not guilty either before God or men. One of the agents of Monsieur, the king's only brother; of the Duke of Bouillon, sovereign prince of Sedan; of the grand equerry D'Esfiat Cinq-Mars, had verbally communicated the plan of the conspiracy to the counsellor of state. He went immediately in search of the grand equerry Cinq-Mars, and did every thing in his power to dissuade him from the enterprise. He strongly remonstrated on the difficulties which would attend it. If he had then discovered the conspirators, he had no proofs; he would have been overwhelmed by the opposite evidence of the presumptive heir of the crown, by that of a sovereign

vereign prince ; of the king's favourite ; and by the public execration. He exposed himself to be punished as a base calumniator.

The Chancellor Seguier is of this opinion, after having confronted De Thou with the grand equerry. It was at that time De Thou said to Cinq-Mars the very words we find in the verbal process. " Recollect, Sir, that not a day passed, in which I did not speak to you of this treaty, in order to dissuade you from it." Cinq-Mars acknowledged what he said to be truth. De Thou therefore deserved a recompence rather than death, from a tribunal of equity. He deserved, at least, that Cardinal Richlieu should have spared him ; but humanity was not his virtue. In this case, there is something more to be said, than *summum jus, summa injuria*, " extreme justice is extreme injury." The sentence of death pronounced on this worthy man, says, " for having had knowledge and participation of the said conspiracies." It does not say, for not having revealed them. It seems, that his crime was being acquainted with a crime ; and he was thought worthy of death for having had eyes and ears.

C H A P. XVI.

Of Discoveries by Means of religious Confessions.

JAURIGNI and Balthazar Gerard, by whom William the First, Prince of Orange, was assassinated ; Clement, Chatell, Ravillac, and all the other paricides of those times, went to confession before they committed their crimes. Fanaticism was carried to such excesses in that wretched age, that confession was an additional engagement to the commission of villainy ; an engagement held extremely sacred, because confession is a sacrament.

Strada

Strada himself says, that Jaurigni, *non ante facinus aggredi sustinuit quam expiatam nexis animam apud Dominicanum sacerdotem celesti pane firmaverit.*—"Jaurigni would not venture on the enterprize, until, by partaking of the heavenly bread, he had fortified his soul, purged by confession, at the feet of a Dominican."

In the interrogatories of Ravillac, it appears, that as he was going from the Feuillants to the Jesuit's College, he addressed himself to the Jesuit D'Aubigni; that after conversing with him on several apparitions which he had seen, he shewed him a knife, on the blade of which were engraved a heart and a cross; and said, "this heart signifies that the heart of the king should be induced to make war on the Huguenots." If this Daubigni had possessed zeal and prudence enough to have informed the king of these words, the man might have been discovered by a description of him, and the best of kings might possibly have escaped assassination.

On the twentieth of August, in the year 1610, three months after the death of Henry IV. whose wounds were still bleeding in the hearts of all Frenchmen, the Advocate General Servin, whose memory is now illustrious, required the Jesuits should be obliged to sign the four following articles:

- I. That the council is superior to the Pope.
- II. That the Pope, by excommunication, cannot deprive the king of any of his rights.
- III. That ecclesiastics, like all other people, are wholly subject to the king.
- IV. That a priest, who, by confession, obtains the knowledge of a conspiracy against the king or the state, should reveal it to the magistrate.

On the 22d, the parliament issued an *arrêt*, forbidding the Jesuits to instruct youth, until they had signed those four articles. But the power of the court of Rome was at that time so great, and that of the

the court of France so inconsiderable, that the *arrêt* proved ineffectual.

It deserves notice, that this court of Rome, which would not suffer confession to be revealed, when the life of a sovereign was concerned, obliged the confessors to inform the Inquisition, when any female should accuse other priests of having seduced, or attempted to seduce them. Paul IV. Pius IV. Clement VIII. and Gregory XV. ordered this discovery. It was a snare very dangerous both to the confessor and to the penitent. It was converting a sacrament into a register of accusations and of acts of sacrilege; for by the ancient canons, and particularly by the Lateran council under Innocent III. every confessor who reveals what has been confessed to him, of whatever nature it be, shall be laid under an interdict, or imprisoned for life.

In this shocking manner, we see four different Popes, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, ordering confession to be revealed in cases of impurity, but forbidding it in those of parricide. A woman declares, or conjectures, in her confession to a Carmelite, that a Cordelier had attempted to seduce her. The Carmelite impeaches the Cordelier. A fanatical assassin, believing that he shall serve God by murdering his king, consults his confessor on this matter of conscience; but the confessor would be guilty of sacrilege, if he should save the life of his sovereign.

This dreadful absurdity is one of the consequences of that constant opposition, which has subsisted for so many ages between the ecclesiastical and civil laws; men have been suspended in a thousand cases between the crimes of sacrilege and high-treason; and the rules of right and wrong have been buried in a chaos, from which they are not emerged.

Confession of crimes has been authorised at all times, and in almost all nations. The devotees accused themselves in the mysteries of Orpheus, of Isis, of Ceres, and of Samothrace. The Jews con-

ferred their sins on the day of solemn expiation: and they continue the same custom. Every penitent chuses his confessor, who becomes a penitent in turn; and receives from his companion thirty nine lashes, while he is repeating three times the form of confession, consisting only of thirteen words, which therefore must be general.

None of these confessions descended into particulars, and consequently could never serve as a pretence for those secret consultations, under the shade of which fanatical penitents imagined they could commit crimes with impunity. This is a pernicious practice, by which a salutary institution is corrupted. Confession, which was intended as a curb to iniquity, in times of confusion or of profligacy, has often become an incentive to wickedness. It was for that reason, in all probability, that so many Christian communities have abolished a sacred institution, in which there appeared as much danger as utility.

C H A P. XVII.

Of false Money.

THE crime of coining false money is considered as treason, in the second degree; and with some justice. To commit a robbery on all the people, is to be a traitor to the state. But it may be asked, whether a merchant, who imports ingots from America, and privately converts them into good money, be guilty of treason, and deserving death? which is the punishment annexed to the crime in almost all countries. Nevertheless, he has not robbed any man; nay, he has done service to the state, by increasing the circulation of money. But he has arrogated to himself the prerogative of the king, and has robbed him of a small profit on the coin. It is true, he has
coined

coined good money, but he has set a temptation before others to coin bad. Death, however, is a very severe punishment. I knew a lawyer, who was of opinion, that such criminals should be considered as useful workmen, and condemned in irons to employ themselves in the mint.

CHAP. XVIII.

Of Domestic Theft.

IN some countries, a trifling domestic theft, or a breach of trust, is punished with death. Is not such an inadequate punishment dangerous to the community? Is it not an encouragement to the crime it would correct? If a master prosecute his servant for a small theft, and the criminal suffer death, the whole neighbourhood would hold the master in abhorrence; they must perceive that the law is contrary to nature, and therefore that it is a bad law.

What is the consequence? Masters, to avoid opprobrium, content themselves with dismissing the thief; who goes and steals from another, until he gradually becomes familiar with dishonesty. The punishment being the same for a small as for a great offence, he will of course steal as much as he can, and at last he will not hesitate to turn assassin, to prevent being discovered.

On the contrary, if the punishment were proportioned to the crime; if those who were guilty of a breach of trust were condemned to labour for the public, the master would not hesitate to bring the offender to justice, and crimes would not so much abound. All circumstances concur in proving the great truth, that severe laws are often productive of crimes.

CHAP.

C H A P. XIX.

Suicide.

THE famous Du Verger de Haurane, Abbé de St. Cyran, who is considered as the founder of Port-Royal, wrote a Treatise on Suicide,* in the year 1608, which is become one of the scarcest books in Europe.

"The Decalogue," says that writer, "enjoins we should not kill; in which injunction self-murder seems to be understood, as well as the murder of a neighbour; if, therefore, there be cases in which it is lawful to kill another, there may be cases in which suicide may be lawful. But a man should not attempt his life, until he has consulted his reason. Public authority, the representative of God, may dispose of our lives. The reason of man may also represent the wisdom of the Deity, as it is a ray of the eternal light."

The Abbé de St. Cyran carries this argument to a great length; and after all it is a sophism. But when he comes to exemplify, and descend to particulars, he is not so easily answered. "A man may kill himself," says he, "for the good of his prince, for the good of his country, or for the good of his parents."

It does not appear, that we could, with justice, condemn a Codrus or a Curtius. What prince would presume to punish the family of a man, who had sacrificed himself for his service? What do I say? Is there any prince who would dare not to reward such a family? St. Thomas has said the same thing before

* It was printed in 12mo. at Paris by Toussaints du Brai in 1619, with the king's privilege. It should have been placed in the king's library.

the Abbé de St. Cyran. But there was no need of St. Thomas, of Bonaventure, nor of Haurane to inform us, that a man who dies for his country deserves its praise.

St. Cyran concludes, that a man may do for himself, whatever it may be laudable for him to do for another. The arguments used by Plutarch, Seneca, Montaigne, and a hundred other philosophers, are well known. Indeed the subject is exhausted. I do not pretend to apologise for an action which the laws have condemned; but I do not recollect that either the Old or the New Testament enjoin a man not to relinquish his life, when insupportable. Suicide was not forbidden by the Roman laws; on the contrary, in a ^{*}law of Marcus Antoninus, which was never repealed, it is ordained, "If a brother or a father (not convicted of any crimes) should put himself to death, either to avoid pain, or being weary of life, or from despair and madness—his will, however, shall be valid, or his heirs shall inherit according to law."

Notwithstanding this humane law of our masters, we ordain that the offender should be dragged through the dirt, that a stake should be driven through his corpse; and that his memory should be deemed infamous. We do every thing in our power to dishonour his family. We punish a son, because he has lost his father; and distress a widow, because she has been deprived of her husband. We even confiscate the effects of the deceased, and rob the living of what is due to them in justice. This custom, among many others, is derived to us from the canon law, which forbids the blessing of Christian burial to those who are guilty of self-murder; concluding it is not lawful to inherit on earth from a person who has forfeited his inheritance in heaven. The canon law, under

* Jer. Cod. De bonis eorum qui sibi mortem, Leg. 3. ff. cod.

under the article Penitentia, tells us, that Judas committed a greater crime in hanging himself, than in betraying our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAP. XX.

On a species of Mutilation.

IN the digest of Roman laws, we find a* law of Adrian denouncing death to those physicians who should make eunuchs, either by taking out or bruising the *testes*. The possessions of those who underwent castration were forfeited by the same law. Origen ought certainly to have been punished, as he had submitted to this operation from having rigidly interpreted that passage of St. Matthew, which says, *There be eunuchs which have made themselves so for the kingdom of Heaven's sake.*

Things changed under the succeeding emperors, who imitated the voluptuousness of Asia; especially in the empire of Constantinople, where eunuchs became patriarchs, and generals of armies.

It is the custom at Rome, even in these times, to castrate young children to qualify them for being musicians to the Pope; so that *castrato* and *musico del Papa* are synonymous. The following words were to be seen at Naples not long ago, over the doors of certain barbers, *Qui si castrano maravigliosamente i puti*; "Here boys are castrated in a most admirable manner."

* *Ad legem Corneliam de sicariis.*

C H A P. XXI.

Of Confiscation; a Punishment annexed to all the Crimes which have been mentioned.

IT is a maxim at the bar, that *the man who forfeits his life, forfeits his property*; a maxim which prevails in those countries where customs serve instead of laws. So that, as we have observed, the children of a man who puts an end to his life, are condemned to perish with hunger in the same manner with the children of a murderer. Thus a whole family is punished for the fault of one man.

The father of a family is condemned to the galleys for life by an arbitrary sentence,* either for having harboured a preacher, for hearing a sermon in some cavern or some desert; and his wife and children are reduced to beg their bread.

That jurisprudence which consists in depriving an orphan of support, and in giving to one the possessions of another, was unknown in the times of the Roman republic. It was first introduced by Sylla in his proscriptions; whose rapine one would scarcely have thought worthy of imitation. Indeed this law, dictated by inhumanity and avarice, was never adopted by Cæsar, Trajan, or the Antonini, whose names are still mentioned with respect by all nations; and at last, under Justinian, confiscation took place only in cases of high treason. It seems, that in times of feudal anarchy, princes and lords not being rich, endeavoured to increase their treasures by the condemnation of their subjects; and they established a revenue by crimes. Their laws being arbitrary, and

* See the edit. of 1724, 14th of May, published at the desire of the Cardinal de Fleury and revised by him.

the Roman jurisprudence unknown, customs either cruel or ridiculous prevailed. But at this time, when the power of princes is established on immense and certain riches, there can be no reason for swelling their treasures with the inconsiderable wrecks of unfortunate families. They are generally abandoned to the first who applies for them. But is it the part of a citizen to feed on the blood of another citizen?

The punishment of confiscation is not admitted in countries where the Roman law is established, unless it be within the jurisdiction of the parliament of Toulouse. It was not adopted in countries governed by customs, as those of Bourbon, Berri, Main, Poitou and Bretagne; or it was confined to fixed and immoveable property. It prevailed formerly at Calais, but it was abolished by the English when they became masters of it. It seems strange that the inhabitants of the capital should be subject to severer laws than the people of little towns; but laws have been established by accident, as cottages have been built in villages without regard to uniformity or regularity.

Who would believe, that in the year 1673, in the most brilliant period of the kingdom of France, Omer Talon, the advocate general, expressed himself in full parliament, on the subject of a young lady named Canillac, in these words, "God says, in the 13th chapter of Deuteronomy, If thou comest into a city
" where idolatry reigneth, thou shalt surely smite the
" inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword,
" destroying it utterly, and all that is therein; and
" thou shalt gather all the spoil thereof into the midst
" of the street, and shalt burn with fire the city, and
" all the spoil thereof, for the Lord thy God; and it
" shall be a heap for ever; and there shall cleave
" nought of the cursed to thine hand.

" In the same manner, in the crime of high treason,
" the king being intitled to all, the children were de-

“prived of their inheritance. Naboth being prosecuted, *quia male dixerat regi*, “because he spoke evil of the king,” Ahab took possession of his effects. “David being told that Mephibosheth was in rebellion, gave all his possession to Siba, who brought him the news; *tua sint omnia que fuerunt Mephibosheth.*”

The question under consideration was, who should inherit the paternal estate of Mademoiselle de Canillac, which having been confiscated on account of her father, was relinquished by the king to one of the officers of the treasury, and afterwards bequeathed by him to the testatrix. In this cause, which concerned a young lady of Auvergne, it was, that an advocate general referred to Ahab, king of a district of Palestine, who confiscated the vineyard of Naboth, after assassinating the owner with the poignard of justice; an action so abominable, that it has passed into a proverb, and is held up to inspire men with detestation for such marks of tyranny. There was certainly no affinity between the vineyard of Naboth, and the inheritance of Mademoiselle de Canillac; nor has the murder of Mephibosheth, the grandson of Saul, the son of Jonathan, the friend and protector of David, or the confiscation of his effects, any analogy with the will of this lady.

It was with such pedantry; such folly in regard to quotations foreign to the subject; with such ignorance of the first principles of human nature; with such uncouth and ill-applied prejudices, that jurisprudence has been treated by men who had reputation in their professions. I leave the reader to say to himself, what it would be unnecessary I should say to him.

C H A P. XXII.

On criminal Procedures, and other Forms.

IF it should ever happen in France, that the laws of humanity should meliorate some of our rigorous usages, without facilitating the commission of crimes, we may hope that those legal proceedings will be reformed, in which our legislators have discovered too much severity. Our criminal procedure appears only to point at the destruction of the accused. It is the only principle which is uniform throughout the kingdom. But should not the law be as favourable to the innocent as it is terrible to the guilty?

In England, a man may recover damages from the minister who has ordered him to be unjustly imprisoned: but in France, an innocent person who has been plunged into a dungeon, and has been put to the torture, has no consolation to hope for, no reparation to expect; he is degraded for ever in society. What the innocent degraded! And why? Because his joints have been dislocated; a circumstance which should secure him compassion and respect. The very enquiry concerning crimes, requires some severity; it is the hostility of justice on villainy; but there are generosity and compassion even in war. The brave is always compassionate; why should a lawyer be a barbarian?

Let us only compare in some points our criminal procedure with that of the Romans.

Among the Romans, the witnesses were heard publicly in the presence of the accused, who could make answers, interrogate them himself, or suggest questions to an advocate. Such a procedure was noble and open; it breathed a magnanimity truly Roman.

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With us, all is conducted secretly. A single judge, attended by his secretary, examines one witness after another. This practice, established by Francis I. was authorised by those commissioners who established the ordonnance of Louis XIV. in 1670. A mistake only was the occasion.

In reading the code *de Testibus*, it was imagined these words *testes intrare judicii secretum* signified, that the witnesses were interrogated in secret: but *secretum* here means the judge's chamber or closet. *Intrare secretum*, to signify speaking, or giving evidence secretly, would not be good Latin. This part of our jurisprudence therefore is founded on a grammatical solecism.

Witnesses are in general taken from the dregs of the people; and when shut up with the judge, he cannot find it very difficult to make them say what he pleases. These witnesses are heard a second time, but in secret; this is called re-examination. If, after this re-examination, they retract their depositions, or if they vary in essential circumstances, they are punished as false witnesses. So that if a man of a simple character, not very dexterous in the use of words, but of an honest heart, should recollect that he has said too much or too little; that he has misunderstood his judge, or his judge misunderstood him; and should recall what he has said from a principle of justice, he is punished as a villain, and is often forced to adhere to false evidence, merely by the apprehension of being punished as if he had perjured himself.

By flight the accused exposes himself to be condemned, whether the crime be or be not proved. Indeed some lawyers have asserted, that contempt should not occasion a man to be condemned, unless the crime be clearly proved. But other lawyers, less informed, though perhaps they have more authority, are of a contrary opinion; they have ventured to assert, that
the

the flight of the accused is a proof of his guilt ; and that the contempt which he shewed for justice, in refusing to make his appearance, deserved the same chastisement as if he had been convicted. Thus the innocent may be discharged or condemned, according to the legal sect which the judge may have embraced.

It is a great abuse of the French jurisprudence, that the reveries, and sometimes cruel errors of men, are taken for laws, while those men have been destitute of information and principles, and have only given their sentiments for laws.

In the reign of Louis XIV. two ordonnances were made, which are uniform throughout the kingdom. In the first, which has civil proceedings for its objects, the judges are prohibited to condemn on default in matters merely civil, when the demand is not made out : but in the second, which regulates criminal proceedings, it is not said, that for want of proofs the person accused should be discharged. Strange ! the law should ordain, that a man who is sued for debt should not be condemned in default, unless the debt be proved ; but where the life of a man is concerned, it is a question at the bar, whether a person is to be condemned when his crime is not proved ; and the law does not resolve the difficulty.

When the accused has recourse to flight, you commence by seizing and taking an inventory of his effects. You do not wait until the process against him is finished. You have no proofs ; you do not know whether he is innocent or guilty ; and you begin by putting him to an immense expense.

You say, it is a punishment which you inflict on disobedience of an order to arrest the accused : but does not the extreme rigour of your criminal proceedings tempt men to this disobedience ?

Is a man accused of a crime ? You first shut him up in a dreadful dungeon ; you do not allow him to have

have any communication with others, and you load him with irons, as if you had actually adjudged him guilty. The witnesses who swear against him are heard secretly; they are hardly ever obliged to confront the accused even for a moment; whereas he ought to be allowed, before the depositions are taken, to alledge his objections to the evidence, and to adduce circumstances against it; he should be permitted to produce persons to support his objections: but the depositions against him are taken and read, and he is not admitted to invalidate them; for if he should prove, that the witnesses have exaggerated some faults, or have omitted others, or that they have deceived themselves in some details, the fear of punishment will oblige them to persist in perjury. If any circumstances which should have been produced by the accused in his interrogatories are reported differently by the witnesses, this is sufficient, with judges who are either prepossessed or ignorant, to condemn an innocent man.

What man is there, whom such procedures will not alarm? What man so just, as to be sure he will not be oppressed? O ye judges! Would you, that the innocent should not fly? Facilitate to them the means of their defence.

The law seems to oblige the magistrate to conduct himself towards the accused rather as an enemy than a judge. The judge has it in his power to order * the accused and the witness to be confronted, or not, as he thinks fit. It is strange, that so necessary a circumstance should be left to his will.

Custom in this case seems to be in opposition to an equivocal law. The parties are confronted: but the judge does not always order in all the witnesses; he often omits those whose charges do not seem to him considerable, when perhaps a witness who has

* *Et si besoin est confrontez.* Ordonnance de 1670, art. i. titre 15.
said

said nothing against the accused in the information, might depose in his favour when confronted. A witness may have forgotten circumstances favourable to the accused; or the judge might not at first have perceived the importance of those circumstances, or duly recorded them. It is therefore very important, that all the witnesses should be confronted with the accused, and that this circumstance be not left to the will of any person.

If the process be a criminal one, the accused is not allowed an advocate, he therefore has recourse to flight, the very maxims of the bar oblige him to it; but having fled, he may be condemned, whether his crime be or be not proved. A man who is sued for money is not condemned by default, unless his debt be proved: but if a man's life is in question, he may be condemned by default, although his crime be not proved. How! does the law set a greater value on money than on a man's life! O ye judges! consult the pious Antoninus and the good Trajan; they * forbid that an absent man be condemned.

Your laws permit an extortioner, or a fraudulent bankrupt, to have recourse to an advocate, and very often a man of honour is deprived of his assistance. If there be an instance in which innocence has been justified by means of an advocate, the law which deprives men of such an advantage is evidently unjust.

The first president De Lamoignon says, in opposition to this law, " that the custom of allowing an advocate or council to those who are accused, is not a privilege allowed by ordonnances and laws, it is a liberty arising from natural right, which is more ancient than all human laws. Nature teaches every man, that he should have recourse to the abilities of others, when he is not sufficient to manage his own concerns; and that he should procure assi-

* *Dig. de leg. De absentibus* § l. 5, *de pœnis*.

“ stance, when he is not strong enough for his own
 “ defence. Our laws have deprived the accused of
 “ so many advantages, that it is very necessary to
 “ preserve to them those that remain, and particular-
 “ ly the privilege of council, which is the most es-
 “ sential of them. If we compare our proceedings
 “ with those of the Romans and other nations, we
 “ shall find none so rigorous as those of France, par-
 “ ticularly since the ordonnance of 1539. *Proc.*
 “ *Verb. de l'Ord.*, p. 163.”

They have been extremely rigorous since the ordonnance of 1670: but they would be greatly softened, if the majority of the commissioners had entertained the sentiments of Mr. De Lamoignon.

The parliament of Toulouse has a peculiar custom, in regard to proofs by witnesses. In other places, demi-proofs are admitted; which, in fact, are but doubts, for we know there are no demi-truths: but at Toulouse, they admit of one fourth or one eighth of a proof. For example; a hear-say may be admitted as a quarter, and another hear-say more vague, as an eighth; so that eight rumours, which are only the echo of an ill-grounded report, may become a complete proof. It was nearly on this principle, that John Calas was condemned to be broken alive on the wheel. The Roman laws require proofs

Luce meridiane clariores.

Clearer than meridian light,

CHAP.

C H A P. XXIII.

An Idea of some Degree of Reformation.

THE magistracy is so respectable, that the only country in which it is venal is incessantly praying to be delivered from this evil. It is to be wished, that the civilian might by his merit reach a situation to administer that justice which he has defended by his application, by his voice, by his writings. Perhaps then we might see a regular and uniform jurisprudence arising from the happy labours of men.

Are we ever to see the same cause adjudged differently in a province and in the capital? Is it necessary that the same man should be right in Bretagne and wrong in Languedoc? What do I say? There are as many forms of jurisprudence as there are cities. And in the same parliament, the maxims of one chamber* are not those of another.

What astonishing contrarieties in the laws of one kingdom! At Paris, a man who has resided in the city a year and a day, is reputed a citizen. In Franche Comté, a freeman who remains a year and a day in a house in mort-main, becomes a slave; his collateral heirs are excluded from inheriting the effects he may have acquired elsewhere, and even his children are reduced to beggary, if they have been a year absent from the house in which the father died. This province is called Franche, but where is its freedom?

If we were to attempt fixing the limits between civil authority and ecclesiastical usages, what endless disputes! Where are those limits? Who can reconcile the eternal contradictions between the exchequer and

* See, on this subject, the president Bouhier.

the administration of justice? In short, why in certain countries are there no motives alledged for decrees? Are men ashamed to give any account of the reasons of their adjudications? And why do not those who judge in the name of a sovereign, present their sentences of death to him, before they put them in execution?

On whatever side we turn our eyes, we see only contradictions, hardships, uncertainties, and arbitrary acts. We should therefore endeavour to perfect those laws on which our lives and our fortunes depend.



F I N I S.